



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

Memoirs and Letters of John Simpson.
1877

220
N. 21
10

C 8347.912.15



HARVARD
COLLEGE
LIBRARY



Copy of the original
of the original

MEMOIRS AND LETTERS

JOHN SIMPSON,

A MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

OF THE

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

PRINTED FOR MARY HADLEY.

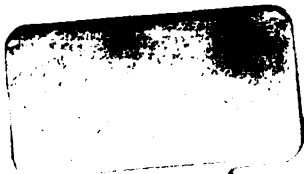
PHILADELPHIA:

1877.

C 8347.912.15



HARVARD
COLLEGE
LIBRARY



24/10/1877
John Simpson
1877

MEMOIRS AND LETTERS

JOHN SIMPSON,

A MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

IN THE

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

PRINTED FOR MARY HADLEY.

PHILADELPHIA:

1877.

C 8347.912.15

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
GIFT OF
HAVERFORD COLLEGE LIBRARY
JUN 19 1889

WM. H. FILE, PRINTER,
422 WALNUT STREET.

F

PREFACE.

THE following selections from John Simpson's letters may be appropriately introduced by parts of the Memorials respecting him, issued by Falls Monthly Meeting, Pennsylvania, and Miami Quarterly Meeting, Ohio. The former of these documents says :

"It appears he was born the 23d day of Tenth mo. 1739, of parents in membership with Friends, who removed (when he was an infant) and settled in the verge of Buckingham Monthly Meeting in this county; and being naturally of a quick and lively disposition, he often indulged himself in levity and mirth incident to unthinking youth; but sometime before he arrived to man's estate, a visitation of divine love was extended to his soul, whereby he was favored to see sin to be exceeding sinful, and as he abode in humility, under the operation of the Spirit upon him, he was favored to experience his own fallen nature in a good degree subjected, and a new birth brought forth.

About the 26th year of his age, he appeared in the ministry, and became an able minister of the gospel; for the promulgation of which he was concerned to visit the meetings on this continent, and many of them several times, his life and conversation corresponding with the gospel. And, as he knew from experience that young people left to themselves often spend time unprofitably, especially on First-day afternoons, he was frequently engaged to sit down with his family in solid retirement; at times had the Scriptures of Truth read therein, and that the benefit might become more general, was engaged to recommend the like practice to others. When differences or disunity arose within his knowledge, he was zealously

engaged to endeavor to bring about a settlement and reconciliation, for which service he was peculiarly gifted.

Having removed to the State of Ohio in the year 1810, and spent some time there in the service of Truth, his mind became easy to return, though in a weak state of health; and proceeding on his journey as far as Waynesville, he departed this life on the 30th day of the Eighth mo. 1811, aged about 72 years. Some extracts from his writings during his sickness are hereto annexed.

‘Now having been above a month tried with sickness and weakness, some days and nights sharp pain as ever I experienced, but most surely I could say, that the Lord did make my bed in sickness, and heard my supplications that I was enabled to put up, that he would look down upon me. The joyful and peaceful state of mind I feel, and also sweet brotherly love among my friends, so that if I have now finished my day’s work, let all my children, connexions, and friends secretly hope, that if I live or die I am the Lord’s. I seldom or ever felt more desirous that Truth might prosper; but feel a heavy cloud over the church, as the Apostle Paul mentions concerning the foolish Galatians. O, may every sensible Christian professor lay it closely to heart, and unite in supplication, that the prophecy of Zephaniah may come to pass: For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.’”

The testimony of Miami Quarterly Meeting is as follows:

“As this our beloved friend closed the evening of his days in this country, we apprehend it might be proper for us to give some account of his labors and services during the short period of his residence within the limits of this Quarter.

He arrived with his family at Waynesville on his way to his intended habitation near West Branch meeting house, a few days before our Quarterly Meeting in the Eighth mo. 1810, which he attended, and in which he appeared to be much favored, being made the channel

through which flowed much salutary counsel, advice, and encouragement to many minds.

Early in the Ninth month in company with some Friends of West Branch Monthly Meeting, he went to Cincinnati, and had a meeting there much to his own and the satisfaction of those who attended; thence to most of the meetings within the limits of Center, Cesar's Creek and Miami Monthly Meetings; frequently appointing meetings where none were usually held; and during the winter visited most or all the other meetings within the limits of our extensive Quarter, having been remarkably favored with health in his travels during the severest part of this winter. In the Third month following, he was taken with a severe illness, but recruited so as to be able to attend our Quarterly Meeting in the Fifth month, though under considerable bodily indisposition.

On First-day night, the 15th of Sixth mo., he uttered the following supplication: "Most righteous Father, thou knowest that a tried remnant yet continues to love thee more than all things, be pleased to go along with and support them through the heights and through the depths and the many trials that may be allotted to their portion, and enable them, O righteous Father, in every dispensation of thy love, in the sincerity of their hearts to ascribe unto thee the honor and the glory forever and forever more." His spirit was often engaged in prayer for the youth, and once in this manner, "Oh Father, that thou wouldst be pleased to pour out of thy spirit upon sons and upon daughters;"—and often invited those about him to come with him into the house of prayer and pray with him and for him.

A few days before his decease, he desired the following testimony to be taken down in writing and spread among his friends as his last legacy.

He observed that the nearer he drew to the close of his life the plainer he saw, and the clearer evidence he had, that the greatest deception Satan practised upon mankind was to persuade them that they could be Christians without that baptism (that is, spiritual baptism), but it was his express desire that they might not be deceived, but be willing to endure that baptism that Christ was baptized

with ; frequently repeating, there is no other way, there is no other way. He often expressed, that he had great peace of mind in having been obedient to what he believed to be his heavenly Father's will, in coming to this western country to finish his work ; that it crowned his evening with joy, though it tended to lay his body far from his near and dear connexions, to which he was resigned : That he was glad he had returned to Waynesville, for he felt himself among his friends ; frequently saying, "I feel like one that has done his day's work ; I have fought a good fight and all is well, dust must return to dust."

About half-past 12 o'clock on the morning of the 30th of the Eighth mo., he quietly departed this life, and on the morning of the 10th of Ninth mo., his body, attended by a large body of Friends and others, was decently interred in Friends' burying ground, Waynesville, with a solemnity suiting the occasion.

Signed in and on behalf of said Meeting, held the 9th of Fifth mo., 1812, by Benjamin Hopkins, Clerk."

The letters which follow appear to have been mostly written whilst absent from home on those religious visits which occupied much of the time of this zealous servant of the Lord.

LETTERS OF JOHN SIMPSON.

3d mo. 1774.

TO HIS FAMILY :

I expect to set out for Boston to-morrow and have not much to say, except to entreat you to keep upon the watch-tower, that you may hear what the Lord your God shall say unto you, and if he is pleased to reprove ever so sharply take it as a favor, ever remembering that the re-proofs of instruction are the way to life; then will you have with Habakkuk to say, that although all outward sustenance should fail, such as figs, flocks, and herds, "yet will I rejoice in the Lord and joy in the God of my salvation." I have been often engaged in spirit for your welfare in supplication that you may be enabled to act rightly.

1st mo. 14th, 1783.

TO RUTH SIMPSON.—[HIS WIFE.]

Thou hast been greatly the concern of my mind since I left thee, and I have been enabled through Divine help, to put up my petitions on thy behalf, begging that thou mayest be supported under thy manifold trials; not that thou mayest be kept from such trials as the Lord in his wisdom may appoint thee, for I do know that He will have a tried people; and if ever we have on the white robe it must be through many tribulations. . . . But be encouraged; remember how much nearer Job was brought to the Lord by affliction than by prosperity, for then he had only heard of Him by the hearing of the ear; "but now mine eye seeth thee," was his language, and then, he was enabled to abhor self and repent in dust and ashes.

24th of the 4th mo., 1785.

To THOMAS ROSS :

I spent most part of last winter in visiting Friends of Long Island Yearly Meeting, and I believe, visited every meeting therein, and have cause to believe there is a living, growing, hopeful people in that northern country that appear in innocence and plainness.

Although many have gone from us, some by death, and many wandering, there is yet a living number that are industriously engaged in the harvest of the great Husbandman, so that I hope there will be testimony bearers in the church ; for in this late unhappy war many minds have been concerned to refuse the payment of war taxes, which testimony I believe is growing, to the honor of the Prince of Peace. Truth's testimony against slavery is spreading among those of other societies, and many negroes get their freedom.

There is also a noble testimony growing against the unnecessary use of spirituous liquors.

Virginia, 12th mo. 6th, 1785.

To RUTH SIMPSON :

I am now at the house of a friend near Fairfax meeting, am much favored with my health, and now expect to go on my journey toward Redstone. I have been favored with Friends' company in travelling, and have also a prospect of agreeable company over the mountains. I have often, my endeared wife, been for thee as for myself, concerned in humble prayer, that thou mightest be preserved through thy many and deep trials. I also recommend to thee to love retirement, seek after it oftener than the morning, and I hope thou wilt yet have cause to rejoice that trials and besetments have been thy lot, because it is the way all must go before they can enjoy that kingdom of heavenly peace and joy in their own hearts.

I saw our dear cousin E. W., whose probations are similar to thine, which revived in my mind a firm belief that the Lord our God was fulfilling his gracious promise to "bring sons from far, and daughters from the ends of the earth."

Little York, 1st mo. 30th, 1786.

TO HIS FAMILY:

Since I last wrote I have had a very severe time of sickness, being taken on the 14th of the 12th month, on my way to Redstone; a considerable distance from friends, but a kind Friend staid with me, and took good care of me; and when Friends of Virginia heard of my sickness, they came with a carriage, brought a bed and clothing, and took me to their settlement, to Joseph Steer's, where I was carefully and skilfully taken care of in a very tender and affectionate manner; and had many visits from neighboring Friends, whose tender regard and sympathy was truly comfortable, in my tried situation.

On the 6th of the 1st month I left J. S.'s, being yet weak in body, but felt inclined to move quietly home, as my strength would admit of, Friends carefully accompanying me from place to place, attending meetings by the way. On coming to York on the 21st, I found my mind turned towards Monallen, Huntington, Warrington, and Newberry meetings, and upon advising with Friends was encouraged to attend them. Returning to York, I still feel my mind shut towards home, and turned to Maryland, expecting to be at their Quarterly Meeting.

Although this journey has been singular in meeting with close trials, both of body and mind, yet I have been mercifully preserved in resignation to the Heavenly Father's will, to live, to die, to go home, or travel abroad; and in this state of mind, when under heavy sickness, I could truly say, "the Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want;" "He makes my bed in sickness." I have been as much preserved from unprofitable discouragements and doubts as in former journeys. There seems great openness in the hearts of many to hear, and I hope a blessing will attend the labors of the faithful, for indeed, "the harvest" appears "to be great."

Neither have I been unmindful of you my dear family, but my petitions to the Father of mercies have been frequent and earnest on your account, particularly, that my dear elder children may so keep their places as to be a pattern to the younger ones.

Virginia, 3d mo. 11th, 1789.

TO THE SAME :

The harvest appears great and many fields are ripe, and there is encouragement to labor in hope. As my labor is at home, so it is abroad, which often leads me in ardent supplication to the Lord our God for you, that you may in practice at home, strengthen and bear up my hands by your circumspect walking. Get to meetings as often as you can, and do not, I entreat you, neglect sitting down together in the family to wait upon the Lord, for this is what I have often to recommend to others, believing that there is a door opening for the revival of this ancient and good practice. And concerning undue liberties taken by the youth, my heart is often grieved beyond expression; but my dear children, my hope and confidence is in you with secret prayer, that you may be to me as Aaron was to Moses in the day of battle . . .

Long Island, 6th mo. 3d, 1789.

. I am now in good health and expect to attend Rhode Island Yearly Meeting Should any of you be tried with sickness be not discouraged, but remember, that death is sure to all, and if by lingering illness we are prepared therefor, may we not count it a favor; for alas! how is the enemy of man's happiness sowing tares of unbelief in the hearts of the children of men, by persuading them that a preparation for death is not so great a work as it really is. For nothing short of a change of heart, from nature to a state of grace, will complete this work, which we of ourselves cannot do, but the promise is, "all that seek shall find." Therefore my dear family, be encouraged to seek the Lord by watchfulness and prayer while he may be found, which will also prepare our hearts to meet the varied cross occurrences that we may be tried with in this life.

13th of the 6th mo., 1789.

. I have attended the several sittings of the Yearly Meeting on Rhode Island, but do not see which way to go forward, therefore, I feel it needful to stand still

Rhode Island, 7th mo. 20th, 1789.

TO THE SAME :

. . . . Finding my mind closely engaged in Truth's service, I expect to cross over to Nantucket. When my labor will be ended here is uncertain, for "the harvest is truly great."

Several ministering friends from Pennsylvania met at the Yearly Meeting, yet none but Z. Ferris, his companion, and myself, seem to be engaged in a general visit.

Now my dear family, I have left you, as Martha was of old, in the care and encumbering things of this world which cannot be avoided, for food and raiment is needful. But for your encouragement, remember, Martha so conducted, that her Lord loved her. My heart is often thankful, that with care and industry I have spent my time, when at home. But when I behold many of my slips and unwatchful moments, how desirous I am that others may take warning thereby.

That of an hurrying mind which I was encouraged in by education, and much prone to by nature, got so the mastery that it caused me many sorrowful moments; and through the Lord's merciful light and assistance I saw it was hurtful to both body and mind; neither likely to advance our business profitably. So dear children, guard against it, and live in love and condescension, one to another. Keep to meetings when you can, and seek for strength to sit down together at home. Although I am far from you in body I am often with you in mind, having remembrance of you in the house of prayer, with desires of being remembered by you when favored with the spirit of prayer; which it is our duty often to seek for, and we shall find if we seek aright. J. S.

Plymouth, 12th mo. 15th, 1789.

. . . . I am now in as good health as common, and feel my mind drawn to go forward according to my first prospect.

I cannot fully describe the exercise I felt when I left home, lest I was not rightly commissioned for so great a work; for although I was drawn to have a sitting together

at parting, I suffered weakness and trial to prevent me. But the care and willingness that appear among you from time to time, to give me up, has been cause of unspeakable comfort, and brings you near in spirit to me, so that my intercessions are often put up to the Father of mercies that none of you may be content with the name of religion, but seek an acquaintance with the Lord, by watchfulness and prayer, so that if any of you should be suddenly called by death from this world, you may be in readiness to bid farewell. Endeavor to keep before your eyes that death is sure to all, and how many of late have been summoned to the silent grave; even some of the blooming youth.

J. S.

No date.

. Since thou hast removed to the southward I have often had thee in remembrance, with desires for thy welfare, feeling my heart at times enlarged in humble prayer, that thy faith may not fail in times of trial and deep baptism, which is the lot of every sincere christian that follows Him, who was meek and low of heart, who queried with James and John, if they could be baptized with the baptism that He, their Lord and Master, was baptized with; and drink of the cup of suffering that He was to drink of, which they had faith to believe they could. Although they had been led into mistaken notions of greatness, such as "sitting on the right hand and left," as they became willing to turn their minds from all worldly greatness to take up their daily cross, and to submit themselves to whatever baptisms fell to their lot, they became truly great.

Therefore, if it should be thy lot to pass through seasons where thou mayest have to drink of the cup of sorrow, remember the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering, which the prophet foresaw and certified, that "In his humiliation his judgment was taken away," that He cried out *like* one forsaken. So in seasons of deep trial and distress did the prophet Elijah find his judgment so taken away as to believe, that Israel had entirely forsaken the Lord their God. It is indeed a time of suffering with the humble in heart, for we see the proud

called happy, and the workers of iniquity set up. Yet may those who fear the Lord, speak or write one to another, to stir up the pure mind by way of remembrance, that a Christian life is a life of watchfulness and prayer. May we then often seek the closet of prayer, that we may with the spirit and understanding, petition even for the rulers of our land, that they may like Solomon be blessed with wisdom and knowledge to govern aright. J. S.

7th mo. 11th, 1790.

. . . . I have been much favored with my health since I left home, and have met with a kind reception among friends. Strength has been given to perform the work whereunto I am called, so that I feel my way forward, trusting in that hand that has hitherto supported me, fondly hoping that you may be supported so as to assist in carrying on the work of faithfully laboring in the Father's harvest, so that we may be favored to see with thankfulness the many favors which surround us; which will preserve us from a murmuring spirit, and beget a willingness to render unto the Lord his due, and to live so as to be prepared for the great and final change. To keep the mind resigned to the divine will, it is good to labor to draw it into an holy quiet before him that made us, frequently reading the scriptures of Truth, which practice I recommend to you, believing it to be a source of consolation.

TO A FRIEND:

I have often thought of thee since our passage together from New York, particularly, of thy queries respecting our faith and belief in the millennium which I could have answered, if time and opportunity had afforded, but I love to have a due sense of the weight of religious matters on my mind when I speak of them.

As to what is called the millennium, and the writings of the learned concerning it, I leave, often remembering the strange conceptions of the Jews concerning the coming of Christ, although so plainly spoken of by the prophets, "that He should be a man of sorrow and acquainted with

grief; that there should be no form nor comeliness that any should desire Him ;” and “ that He should be the Prince of Peace.”

Yet were they looking for something great and powerful, and thus missed the greatest of blessings. Now the prophets clearly unite in foretelling a day of peace, wherein war should cease, and that the Lord should make a new covenant with His people, and write His law in their hearts in so plain a manner that all shall know Him, from the least to the greatest, without the necessity of looking to the priest's lips for knowledge, nor for the law at the mouth of man ; that His Holy Spirit should be poured out on sons and daughters, servants and handmaidens, whereby they were to be qualified to prophesy, which is defined to be speaking to the edification, exhortation and comfort of the church ; and those prophecies were to be fulfilled in the latter days, which we believe to be the days of the gospel ; and that light and knowledge are now breaking forth after a dark night of apostacy, and of falling away from primitive christianity, spoken of by the holy apostle ; and that those comforts spoken of in the scriptures are now enjoyed by the faithful who have witnessed a coming to Christ in humility of heart, and who have known Him to be the resurrection from the dead, that is, from all dead works to a living faith ; that over those who have part in the first resurrection the second death will have no power, and that they shall reign with Christ in peace on earth and good will to men in watchfulness and prayer ; and when time on earth shall be no more they will be numbered with the sheep on the right hand, there to receive the welcome sentence, “ enter ye into the kingdom prepared for the righteous ;” and in this glorious resurrection, join in company with saints and angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, in the presence of the Lamb forever and forevermore. J. S.

Fairfax, 11th of the 6th mo., 1791.

TO HIS SON :

As thou art now arrived to years of understanding, I use this freedom to inform thee that my trials have been great since my mind has been engaged in this journey,

many ways ; for I consider, that much of my service is to promote order in Society, which cannot be without we are sober and orderly at home, of which I hope thou art more and more sensible; for I believe that thy mind has been visited at times, with a sense of good, and my heart's desire and prayer has been much for thee, that thou mightest conduct so as to bear up my hands in my religious labor; for, dear son, the eyes of the people are upon us and our children. Therefore, I hope thou wilt lay these things so to heart as to be truly watchful in all thy movements. Flee from vain and idle company, love retirement, seek for the closet of prayer oftener than the morning, and it will comfort thee through thy varied trials. Be kind and affectionate to thy tender mother and sisters. Do not neglect the attendance of religious meetings and the frequent reading of the holy scriptures, that so thou mayest know the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind, which will be productive of more comfort than all worldly riches and delights, and make thee more honorable in this world, and insure thee a blessed inheritance in the world to come.

I have seen two young people sunk in the pit of despair since I left home, that it was truly moving to behold them; repeating their cries, that the day of their visitation was over and gone. I have thought sometimes that the cries of such were enough to awaken both young and old to a sense of their duty.

I expect my journey will be long, and not knowing that we may ever meet again in this world, my desire is, that we may spend our precious time so as to meet in everlasting joy. From thy exercised father,

JOHN SIMPSON.

9th mo. 19th, 1791.

. . . . I have been very much favored with my health of late, though somewhat afflicted in the commencement of my journey.

The ticks, which are so numerous in these southern countries, I find very troublesome. I have been favored to bear riding very comfortably, and as for my various trials in my religious service, every experienced servant

knows they are not to be expressed in words, neither can they be understood by the hearing of the ear. But as Paul witnessed heavenly grace to be sufficient for him, so may I acknowledge it has been my director and protector in every needful time; and now, feeling my way to advance forward in my service, which is often very singular, and different from many brethren; which causes me many times to remember the remarks of dear Robert Walker, who, when on religious travel together, would sometimes pleasantly say to me, "Thou wilt often remember poor old Robert, when far from thee." And when expecting to take his last leave of me, he said, "John, I perceive thou wilt have to tread in untrodden paths, where there will be no experienced father to instruct thee, thou must therefore retire as behind the wine-press alone, and seek instruction there for thyself."

I am now at Noley Chuckey settlement, and expect soon to proceed over the mountains for South Carolina, where S. W. resides. I am informed it is a long journey of five or six days travel, and only a path part of the way. And now my dear family, I may inform you, that you are often in my mind so as to lead me into earnest intercession for your welfare; and sometimes I feel a secret hope of your preservation in my absence, and at other times a fear that some of you will so conduct as to weaken my service abroad. My hope, my trust, and confidence is in the Lord, who, I believe, has called me abroad, and if you look to him, he will be your support in every trying time; therefore, be encouraged to press forward. Keep to the attendance of religious meetings, and the frequent reading of the holy scriptures, and other good books; seek for strength to sit down at home in humble retirement together in the family, at convenient seasons, to wait upon the Lord; and when seated to partake of your daily food, strive to be orderly and sober, that you may be enabled to return thanks for the daily favors you receive. And as you have been mercifully preserved from visiting or receiving visits on the First-day, and have seen the good effects thereof, I hope for your continuance in well doing.

3d of 12th mo., 1791.

DEAR WIFE AND TENDER CHILDREN :

I am now arrived in Charleston, after a long wilderness journey through the western parts of Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, and have visited Friends' Meetings generally, having been preserved in as good a state of health as is common for me to enjoy, only afflicted with sores, occasioned by the biting of ticks, but since the cool weather they have got well; and through all my journeyings and lodging in the woods many times, I have been wonderfully supported with strength of body, and preserved from sinking in mind below hope; for trials, even deep trials, are often my lot, and must be the lot of all christian travellers, therefore my hope and confidence is in that Power that can support and deliver from the greatest trials, and will not suffer any affliction or temptation to overtake, but what there will be way made for the deliverance of the faithful. Therefore, dear wife and family, let us join in spirit, although absent in body, and strive to intercede for the welfare of each other when favored to have admittance to the Throne of Grace. I have never received a line from any one concerning you since I left home until now, which often brought me under great concern, many ways; but now I have received four letters. . . . All to my great satisfaction.

Now as to the remainder of my visit; I expect to turn homewards through the eastern parts of the several States, visiting Friends as Truth may open my way, but cannot see when I shall reach home; for this has been comfortable to me, my mind being released from all worldly enjoyments. I do not feel my mind enlarged to write much more, having often written to you since I left home by way of advice, as well as information. Now, hoping you may so conduct at home, as to bear up my hands in my labors abroad, I affectionately bid all farewell. J. S

In the year 1794, I saw at the house of a friend, a young woman, who addressed a few words to me on a religious subject, but being engaged in conversation I made no reply, intending to notice her at a more convenient season, but she withdrew, and I saw her no more. I have since

so often thought of her, that I have been induced to address these lines to her; for I feel a tender regard for every seeking soul, and wish for its encouragement, for the promise is, "They shall find," and, as the Queen of the South, witness and acknowledge that the half had not been told them, and that the Lord's people are happy indeed. In like manner was the enquiring woman of Samaria informed, concerning worship, that the Samaritans worshipped they knew not what, and that salvation was of the Jews.

It appears that the Samaritans were a bewildered people, as are many at this day of light and knowledge, yet many enlightened minds may see clearly, as did the apostles and brethren, that the traditions of the Jewish fathers were not obligatory on Christians; that the law was a shadow of good things to come, and was only designed to continue until the time of the reformation. They saw it good to lay none of those outward ceremonies on them, but left each one to seek for himself as our Lord Jesus Christ commanded, with the promise that he should find, who being brought up in the law submitted himself to John's baptism; but *He* (Jesus) baptized none with elementary water. When near leaving the world, as to His bodily presence, He promised to send His Holy Spirit to be a guide to His people to the end of the world, and bring all things to their remembrance. The water baptism of John, in a most lively manner, points to the spiritual baptism, which is the answer of a good conscience toward God. John, although a great prophet, was inferior to those who saw the glorious gospel kingdom, yet he prophesied the decrease of his baptism and the increase of Christ's; which will fit and prepare the faithful, seeking soul for the enjoyment of that kingdom our Lord taught His disciples to pray for, of peace on earth and good will to men, when the sword shall be beaten into the ploughshare, and war be learned no more, every one sitting under his own vine and under his own fig-tree, without fear, there being none to hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain, (His gospel church); where the shadows are fleeing away and true spiritual worship is restored, and the heavenly mind, in the silence of all flesh, offering the

spiritual offering of living prayer as directed by our Lord; which will ascend into the presence of Him who sitteth on the throne, who will reward openly. May we then individually know in this the day of our visitation, the things that belong unto our peace, and not stand out until they are hid from our eyes, but join in prayer to the Lord of the harvest, that He may send forth more laborers into His vineyard, that they may be instrumental in His hand, to gather from the different corners of the earth, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the glorious kingdom that is at hand, where the Prince of peace shall rule and reign, in that government that shall increase forever and forevermore, world without end.

God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, shall be accepted of Him. There are many, that from living experience can testify, that there is a reward for the righteous that exceeds the reward of gold or silver, as wheat exceedeth chaff. J. S.

1794.

My concern was and is for thee, my friend, and it will be cause of joy to see fruits of christianity brought forth in thee. I wish thee then to be encouraged, for there is so plain a way cast up, that the wayfaring man, though a fool as to the learning of this world, may walk therein; and the promise is sure to the seeking soul, that it shall find this way, which is, to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly. The same in substance doth the apostle remark, that "divine grace teacheth to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Our Lord has left an infallible mark, that the tree should be known by its fruit, and the apostle wished to see faith accompanied with good works; and testified, that by idleness in not providing for their own, men denied the faith and became worse than infidels. J. S.

1794. 20 miles below Albany.

My visit at home was humbling to my mind, and caused me often to remember king David's words, "What shall

I render unto thee for all thy benefits?" And I hope that you, my dear family, may likewise be favored with thankful hearts; it will make the blessings we receive, both spiritual and temporal, a comfort to us; it will also preserve us from repining and complaining when trials overtake us, for in this world we shall have trouble, but in the communion of Christ's holy spirit, peace.

Therefore, my desire is, that you may daily seek for this sweet peace, which is that heavenly kingdom within that our Lord said was at hand, and that repentance was the way to it. It leads to the acknowledgment of our transgressions rather than to hide them; for indeed it is cause of deep mourning to the enlightened mind to feel the clouds of darkness that often cover our assemblies, because of hidden sins. When I call to remembrance the declaration of our Lord when on earth, that there should be wolves in sheep's clothing, and also the many instances that have lately appeared among high professors of different denominations, both in my native land and lands remote, they rise like clouds of discouragement, and add to the deep wadings I have to pass through. But blessed be that power that has been like a brook, even like rivers in the midst of valleys, where the weary traveller has been refreshed. My mind at these seasons, has been led to supplicate the throne of grace on your behalf, with hope and faith to believe, that the Lord will grant His life-giving presence, so that you will walk before Him in watchfulness and humble gratitude, and that the hearts of the parents may unite with the children in so great and good a work.

J. S.

Since I have been growing in years, I often remember the prayers of aged ones. David interceded with the Lord not to forsake him when he was old and grey-headed. Jacob also prayed, that He who had been with him all his life long might bless the lads; so do I feel for and sympathize with you as fatherless children; but remember, that the Lord has promised to be a father to the fatherless, and a judge to the widow. I feel desirous that you may crave wisdom to guide you through this world of care, for

we are told, that in this world we shall have trouble, but saith our blessed Master, "In me ye shall have peace."

Let us remember, that the Christian dispensation was, not to destroy men's lives but to save them, and overcome evil with good; that thus the prophecy of Isaiah may be fulfilled, that there shall be none to hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain.

J. S.

25th of the 8th mo., 1794.

You never, my dear family, more interested my mind than at the present time; not with doubt and distress, but with a lively hope that all things may work together for good, even in outward affairs; and also for your growth in religion, for I must believe that you are sensible of my abundant exercise for your present, and everlasting welfare; and also that I believe, that there is a necessity laid upon me to travel far and wide, giving up all that is near and dear to me in this life, for no other cause than the good of souls. But the promise that was made to those who should do this, is not withheld, in this our day; for although many and unspeakable are the trials we meet with at times, there are also times of refreshment, even like being brought to the banqueting house. At these seasons my intercessions are poured forth like King David's, "Oh that men would fear the Lord," and that all would come taste and see how good He is to those who faithfully seek and serve Him.

J. S.

New York, 1794.

I feel much for you my dear family, in the consideration of your many trials; for although I stand in the relation of a father and head of a family, instead of assisting you in the heavy burden of worldly business I am a means of increasing it, for the little time I have at home is mostly spent in preparing for fresh labor. The preparation of the heart is of the Lord, who sees meet in His wisdom, to prove and deeply try His servants, to fit them for His service. Some of them, I believe, can feelingly understand those expressions concerning the Lord of life and glory, that in His humiliation His judgment was taken away, so as to cry out as one forsaken.

In the remembrance of my weakness at such seasons I feel a sense of confusion; for when I strove to wash the face, and anoint the head, and to guard against sinking, that the language of hard master might not be heard from me; how often like a drunken man, did I totter to and fro, so that fear overtook me, lest I should bring dishonor on the blessed truth. But now there is a new song put into my mouth, so that I can speak well of the Lord, with a thankful heart, hoping to seek and to serve Him all the days of my life. And may you who have to abide by the stuff, live in love, in watchfulness, and fear, laboring to support the testimony of our Lord Jesus, at home; then you will fare with me, and feel with me, in many of my trying moments, farewell.

J. S.

TO HIS FAMILY:

After the Yearly Meeting I expect to set my face homeward, with a living hope, that if it should please the Father of all our mercies, that we should meet again in this world, grace may so abound, that we may meet each other with joy, and rejoicing in the Lord, that may continue during our pilgrimage here.

Keep, therefore, to the watch-tower, always remembering, that the Christian life is one of warfare. This will beget an hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and a desire constantly to attend religious meetings, often in the meantime, sitting down in the family together, to wait upon the Lord for the renewal of your strength. And in your approaches to the throne of grace, I crave it of you to seek the Lord in prayer for me, that humility of heart as well as utterance may be given me.

J. S.

1794.

I may acknowledge, my visit at home was humbling to my mind, and caused me often to remember King David's words, "What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits?"

I had deeply baptizing seasons before I could give up again to leave you, yet I believe, that were I to stay, when called to labor abroad in the harvest of the great Husbandman, I should be to you like Jonah to the poor

mariners, a loss instead of gain ; but since I have given up, my mind has been calm and much comforted.

My secret intercessions are often put up to the Father of all our sure mercies, that you may be kept from every hurtful thing. Do not work harder than your constitutions can bear, but hire the hardest part of the labor. Strive to live in love, one with another, watching over each other for good, ever ready to receive counsel. He, in whom there is peace, is standing at the door of our hearts, seeking for an entrance ; therefore, let us often retire into silent meditation, even when our hands are engaged in labor. This has been an unspeakable comfort to me, when I saw no other way to do justly than to work harder than some might think right, rising early, and lying down late. But the Lord was my portion, to whom I could appeal, "Thou knowest I wish to do right," and though my slips were many, yet He who seeth not as man, often replenished my heart with a measure of His heavenly grace, and to this day I am made thankful that I have been industrious.

To J. M. :

As our acquaintance has been from our youth to the present day, we can remember the common conversation that passed among us, how it was calculated to provoke to folly, yea, and wickedness ; which was so frequently and pleasantly spoken of, that the sinfulness thereof seemed hid from our eyes. Now may we, I say, as is recommended in the 51st chapter of Isaiah, 1st verse, "Look unto the rock whence we were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence we were digged." For oh ! how hard-hearted is poor man, in a state of nature ! What cause have I to bless the Lord Almighty, who met with me in the days of my youth, and plucked me from that horrible pit of darkness ! so that I now have spent about forty years in striving to live the life of the righteous, and feel a comfortable hope, that I may die the death of the righteous ; and that my latter end may be like theirs. And as we are told in the scriptures of truth, that the Lord is a God of mercy, and called some a+ at the eleventh hour, so that they got the penny, the reward of peace, and so mayest thou.

As saith the prophet, When the Lord's judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants shall learn righteousness; and although grievous and sorrowful have been the trials that have been permitted to befall thy family, almost as though the judgments of an offended God were let loose, yet when I was last with you I did believe there was hope, remembering the promise, that all things shall work together for good, to those who love the Lord. These things are hard to bear, but they may have a tendency to humble the mind, and awaken it to see the sinfulness of sin, so as no more to encourage it by foolish jesting and talking, remembering, that for every idle word, we must give an account in the day of judgment. That day cannot be far from us aged ones, so that we have need to redeem the little time allotted us, in watchfulness and prayer, and like David, king of Israel, to intercede with the Lord, to forsake us not when we are old and grey-headed, that we may, like the apostle, when the messenger of Satan was permitted to buffet him, as a thorn in the flesh, be made more than conquerors; and so live as to have an assurance at the end, of a house eternal in the heavens, and also be a blessing to numbers of our fellow creatures.

J. S.

What shall I write, or what can I write, but a repetition of former remarks and advices? in order if possible, to bring thee to a serious consideration of the many visitations and warnings thou hast had from the days of thy youth. I have been ready to say, if I had resisted these as thou hast done, my God would have forsaken me, but blessed be the God of mercy, who is yet visiting thee, and although it may seem, at this time, as if His judgments were hardly mixed with mercy, but as if He had forsaken and left thee, and thy nearest connections, to the destroyer of all good, yet may it be a warning to thee to guard against light and frothy conversation, which is an encouragement to vice, for oh, my dear J., my heart fails and my tears flow when I consider, that if thou hadst kept thy place, and been obedient to what was made known to thee, those sorrowful things might not have happened.

I may never see thee more: for these long wilderness journeys have been trying in younger life, and in all probability will be more so now when advanced in years. Yet this is trifling in comparison with life eternal and the good of souls, for which I have, for the most part of thirty years, labored diligently, during which time my own hands have ministered to my necessities, working day and night, rather than to make the gospel chargeable, and the Lord has blessed me in basket, and in store. When I consider the frailty and the weakness of human nature, compassion flows, accompanied with a comfortable hope, that thy God hath not forsaken thee. I can, therefore, add line upon line, and precept upon precept, endeavoring to set an example of living a watchful life, which has made this wilderness world as an Eden, and the desert as the garden of the Lord, so that I can invite thee and all living, to come taste and see how good the Lord is. For oh, how comfortable a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, uniting together in worshipping the Almighty Jehovah, which, if thou hadst been faithful in, I have believed thou wouldst have had to tell to others, what the Lord had done for thy soul. For long ere now it would have been turned from darkness to light, even the light of the gospel. Thou wouldst not have been in the battles of warriors, nor learning the art of war, but would have seen and felt the mark that was on the hundred forty and four thousand sealed ones, which seal is, "Love to God and man."

26th of the 8th mo., 1796.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER, HANNAH SHINN:

I am now at the Falls, expecting to attend our Youths' Meeting. I thought we had a good meeting yesterday. Thy uncle, James Simpson, and Peter Yarnall, were with us, to our comfort, also Joshua Evans, who appears to be as one called to be a sign to the people.

My mind has been thoughtful on thy account; and, like the Apostle Paul, I remember the expression of a poet; for some of them seemed to have a wonderful sense of the power and guardianship of the Lord. When thinking of

thee, part of Watts' beautiful cradle hymn has come before me, beginning, "Hush," &c. Therefore I wish thee to lie down in the true resting place, putting thy hope and confidence in the Lord, who is always near to His children, even in the night season when we know it not; and I have a secret hope, that all things that thou mayst experience may work together for good and for thy advancement in the knowledge of truth, for I hope thou hast seen the danger of walking in the plain of ease and worldly quiet in company with those the world calls good, whom neither worldly justice nor the discipline of the church can condemn. But remember the lesson of selling all was hard to that lovely youth that came inquiring to our Lord, and it remains to be hard to flesh and blood. And if those deep trials that have been permitted to overtake thee, should open a door for the perfecting this work, it will be cause of joy in heaven, in the heavenly minded, and thou wilt have to acknowledge as Job did, after he had learned this new lesson, that his former knowledge was but as the hearing of the ear: "But now," saith he, "mine eye seeth thee." Then was all his own righteousness but as filthy rags, to be abhorred indeed; and when self is thus abased, the Lord in mercy will grant a spirit of penitence and prayer, even to pray for those who may have been as miserable comforters; then there will be cause to hope that the Lord will bless the latter end with spiritual and temporal blessings more than the beginning. Thus then let us be thankful for mercies past and humbly seek for more.

6th of the 6th mo., 1801.

RESPECTED FRIEND, HANNAH HARRIS:

Having an opportunity to write to thee by thy relations, I can inform thee that I called to see thy aged mother before her intended move, and was glad to find her so resigned to her lot, and her dependence placed on that Almighty Arm, who is able to protect all those who put their trust in Him.

. . . . My aged parents are still living.

It has been a time of general health, it has also been a time of great plenty, even unto fulness of bread; but by

accounts received from England, Ireland and Scotland, there is great scarcity ; so that at our last Yearly Meeting, in the Fourth month, we thought it our duty to send some relief to our brethren there. Our present crops looked well until within a few days ; there has been much hurt done by the fly. The city of Baltimore was visited with a pestilential fever last fall, which swept away many of its inhabitants ; but Philadelphia has been favored with health, so that at present we enjoy peace and plenty. We have a numerous generation of goodly talented youth, and I have been comforted in seeing a concern increasing among us for their education, for I have been long of the mind, that if parents took the apostle's advice, in laboring to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, there would be less cause of complaint among our beloved youth ; for as it has been a time of getting wealth, so it has been a time of lavishing it away ; so that in our great cities, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, many are brought into great distress, and cannot pay their debts. Thus we may see the necessity of taking the apostle's advice, "To do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly," and I am in hopes that many will be instructed by the misconduct of others ; for certainly industry and frugality, carefully looking to our own circumstances, and living agreeably thereto, makes us most happy in this life, and opens the way to provide for that which is to come.

As to the state of religion among us, we cannot but acknowledge there has a dark spirit of unbelief risen up like a cloud, under the specious pretence of liberty, that seemed to open a door for licentiousness, even to the neglect of all religious duty ; but I hope there is a remnant, like those the prophet saw, that have not bowed the knee to Baal, nor worshipped his image, among the different societies. The holy Prophets [foretold] that those days would come, when the Lord would teach his people of his ways and they should walk in his paths, until they attained to an entire change of heart ; comparatively speaking, the sword being beat into a ploughshare and the spear into a pruning hook, and war be learned no more. Now, we who are called Quakers, believe the morning of this glorious day is come, and as Christians are faithful to the knowledge

of the Lord, which will fill our earthly hearts as the waters cover the seas, this day of peace will spread. When I behold the signs of the times in this our day, it revives my heart in hope of its spreading.

Our American rulers have seen and loudly proclaimed to the surrounding nations the rights of men, and that all have an equal right to freedom, so that if they are faithful to this light they will be enabled to put the same in practice. For however dark things may appear in regard to the poor Africans, I believe the prophecies concerning them are fulfilling, that Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hands unto God, for truly many of these people seem marvellously enlightened, and their freedom daily increasing. As I travelled through the Southern States some years ago, I thought slavery made the human race the most unhappy of all things I ever beheld, for I was very observant, and beheld the states of the white people very deplorable; the poor blacks, for want of a proper education, are exceedingly trying and perplexing, and I thought there was but little gain to be made by them. The education of white children is also much to be lamented; for instead of their infant minds being taught humility and submission to God and man, they are taught to behave in the most haughty manner, and to domineer over the poor slaves; and instead of being placed in the garden to dress and to keep it, for which end man was made, they are brought up in idleness, and such dissipation, that their lives seemed more uncomfortable and more to be lamented than any state and condition I have ever seen—their hands seem to be worth so little in procuring a livelihood; so that in the whole, I lamented the state of the whites more than the blacks.

Now, as these things came before the view of my mind, I remark them to thee, not doubting thy attention, well knowing thou art blest with talents, and also that the improvement thereof is a matter of the greatest moment; and however the reformed church may see matters respecting the external order of religious worship, rites and ceremonies, we all agree that true religion changes the heart from nature to grace, and brings forth the peaceable fruits of love to God and man. In which I invite

now as age is overtaking thee, to be frequent in reading the Holy Scriptures, which I find profitable above all books for instruction; prayer is a most momentous part of our duty. So our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ hath carefully taught his followers to enter into the closet and put up our petitions to Him who seeth in secret, for true prayer is the offering up of the desire of the mind for things agreeable to his will. Then may Christians unite in interceding for the coming of His glorious gospel kingdom of peace on earth and good will to men; and that His heavenly will may be done in our movements while in this poor earthly tabernacle of clay, for this has been the testimony of the holy apostles and martyrs of Jesus, that by fighting a good fight of faith we shall have a comfortable hope of a crown of righteousness being laid up for all those who love the appearing of Jesus. I have often thought of the account given by Doddridge, of his life of watchfulness, that when in company he oft made solemn pauses and offered up silent ejaculations.

By thus walking we shall feel the spirit of prayer, and put up our petitions to the Lord of the harvest, to send forth laborers into His harvest, which is indeed great; and that this may be the engagement of thy evening and mine, that we may be in such readiness as to say, "Come, welcome death, the end of fears, I am prepared to die," is the desire of thy friend and well wisher.

JOHN SIMPSON.

19th of 7th mo., 1803.

To S. & H. SHINN.

Dear Children:—I am now at Nine Partners, in New York, and have been enabled to travel daily since New York Yearly Meeting, and I think my health rather increasing. I expect to move northward as way opens. My kind friend Robert Underhill, is yet with me.

Now, dear children, in these long and exercising travels, the kindness I meet with seems a great support to me now in old age. There appears a great openness among the people, to attend religious meetings, and I hope labor will not be wholly lost. But I often have to behold how heavenly knowledge is conveyed to us in the line of earthly

business, and beholding how active most people are in their dealings, to beat down the seller, in order to buy cheaply; so I think many who love the truth, want to have it at a lower rate than ever it was to be had.

Therefore, dear children, let this consideration take deep place in your hearts. Have we ever heard of any complaining that the ever blessed truth cost more than it was worth to them? Nay, but on the contrary, what joy and rejoicing have thousands proclaimed of the great advantage it has been to them. Even in the things of this world, how truth brightens the understanding; like unto the virtuous woman who rose early and gave a portion to her maidens, and moved with such discretion as to gain the good will of her family, and worked willingly with her hands, and by prudent economy, gained strength of body and increased worldly treasure, which may be a blessing if rightly enjoyed. But oh, dear children, may you ever remember the charge given to all to watch, which prepares the heart for prayer. Do you ever feel your heart's desire offered up in your most solemn moments for *great* riches, or see them likely to be of benefit to any? Thus may you guard on the right hand and on the left, and so walk safely and be useful in your day.

From your deeply exercised father,

JOHN SIMPSON.

2d mo., 1806.

To R. E——N:

Respected Friend:—Although thou and I are members of the same (Select) Meeting, yet my acquaintance with thee is small. The first solemn feeling of my mind towards thee was, as I sat in meeting thou came near me into the gallery. I knew thee not, being so near sighted; but something like the expression of Jacob ran through my mind, "How dreadful is this place," with secret desires that an awful dread and fear might accompany our minds who fill those seats, and thou mightest be favored with a sense thereof, humbly considering how the eyes of the people are upon us. This led me to inquire who thou wast? and now, on further acquaintance, seeing thy concern to discharge thy trust toward thy friend, in regard

to her coming into the Select Meeting, I hope thou wilt follow the example of King Solomon, to beg for wisdom to direct; remembering it is the humble the Lord teaches of His ways, and also how great a work it has ever been to humble the hearts of men, in order to fit them for judges or counsellors in the church; for our Lord saith, "It were better that a millstone were hanged about the neck," &c., than to offend His little ones. And now, in like manner, I feel concerned for thee, remembering we are cautioned not to lay hands suddenly on any one; but as thou art now a member of the Select Meeting, I wish thy encouragement, remembering the wisdom of our Lord and Saviour in His instructing His own immediate followers and letting them know their infant state, and that He had many things to make known to them they were not yet able to bear, and also plainly told them they knew not what spirit they were of, and most clearly showed the necessity of baptism; and as they faithfully submitted to instruction, they grew in the saving knowledge of the Lord, and became truly useful in His hand.

We are commanded to honor father and mother, the Church, our friends; which has been such a help and comfort to me, even now in old age, that I can recommend it to others, and I hope thou wilt stand open to the advice of thy friends, and look upon thyself to be as the poor disciples were, for I fully believe, as thou art faithful thou wilt experience deeper baptisms than thou hast ever yet known; and oh, mayest thou humbly submit thereto, although it be like the refiner's fire and like fuller's soap, to purge and to purify the sons of Levi, those who are concerned in the ministry, or in the station of elders; for elders must receive a portion of the same spirit before they can be true help-meets and judges in the ministry, travelling with ministers in spirit, bearing up their hands like unto Aaron and Hur bearing up the hands of Moses; and as thou travels forward, thou wilt witness what the apostle saith, that "if any among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, his religion is vain." Oh, how comfortable it is to be truly watchful; and if the Master allow us at times to be of good cheer, when we have been faithfully laboring to be overcomers, let us not

forget that the wise king saith, "I wisdom dwell with prudence."

This from thy exercised friend and well wisher,

JOHN SIMPSON.

5th of the 6th mo., 1806.

DEAR DAUGHTER H.:

I feel thankful to see thee so well both in body and mind. Now mayest thou ever remember that as temperance is to the body so is obedience to the mind, even in small things, and watchfulness is needful on all occasions; for although we most surely believe these days in which we live, to be the latter days spoken of by the prophets, when the Lord will teach his people himself:—But, who are the people he teaches? Most surely the humble. As one of the early reformers remarked to his children, he could call to witness the external actions of his whole life, he never was disappointed of the best guidance, when he in humility and sincerity sought divine wisdom; therefore, if we are not humble and sincere, in vain may we pretend to be taught of the Lord.

Be faithful and industrious in all things committed to thy charge, then mayest thou hope to prosper, which is my faith and hope, having set out in the prospect of such a journey as few of my age have done. I feel as comfortable as at other times, for things never seemed to open more so, nor my worldly affairs more comfortably settled; so that if you, my dear children, are disposed to settle things in love and peace, (as I feel no jealousy to the contrary,) there will be little difficulty. Therefore, I can bid thee and all farewell with gladness and thankfulness of heart, so that if we never meet more, the living may say with thankful hearts, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." So in love and hope I bid thee farewell, and remain thy exercised father,

JOHN SIMPSON.

1st of 7th mo., 1806.

DEAR CHILDREN:

I am now in Redstone settlement, and expect to go forward as way opens towards the western settlements. The

crossing of those mountains seems awful and dangerous, but we have been mercifully preserved, and meeting with a kind reception and comfortable meetings among Friends, my heart is made thankful and encouraged to go forward, but see no time of returning homeward. Our aged Friend, Zebulon Heston, is afflicted with a cancer in his face; but the inhabitants are mostly healthy, and have fine looking crops of wheat.

It is with such difficulty I write, I must be short; yet, feeling the sweet reward of a dedicated heart, I wish all to make a full surrender of body, soul and spirit to the Lord, who has the right to dispose of us; and the complaint taken up against the Laodicean Church I have never been more mindful of, and the call to be zealous and repent, seems needful to be sounded when and where the Lord sees meet to call his servants.

I conclude in much love to all living. Your loving and deeply tried father and sure friend,

JOHN SIMPSON.

5th of the 8th mo., 1806.

MY DEAR CHILDREN:

I can now inform you, that I and my fellow traveller, S. P., have been much favored with our health, and we have also been favored to travel the wilderness, which is indeed a land of hills and valleys—an emblem of poor man in his journey through time, where the mind is sometimes too high and sometimes too low; which teaches us the necessity of continual watchfulness and prayer, by which I trust I have been mercifully preserved unto this day; and may this be the care of our lives, my dear children, for whom my heart is often bowed in humble supplication, and not only for my children but for my friends in general, and I truly desire your's for me, now in my old age, yet I find a concern for the prosperity of Zion as in younger years,—blessed be the Lord, my strength! and to Him I wish to recommend you all, not having time to enlarge.

I am now at the house of Jonathan Taylor and his

wife; they are at home and in as good health as common; we expect to set out in a few days for the Miami country.

Send the contents of this letter to my other children, and remember my love to friends, &c.

Your loving father and sure friend,

JOHN SIMPSON.

WEST BRANCH, STATE OF OHIO,
9th mo. 7th. 1806.

DEAR A. :

Although I am now at a great distance, I am willing to write to thee, and inform thee that as I was so deeply baptized in preparing for this journey, the experienced traveler could sympathize with me. So I have my trials continued; but, as saith the prophet, the Lord will deliver out of them all, which I have comfortably witnessed in my long wilderness travel.

When I remember our little acquaintance, I have often thought it originated somewhat like that intelligence of the little captive maid, whose good wishes were fulfilled; so now thou art often the subject of my thoughts in my most solemn moments, when in the hour of prayer interceding for thee, that thou mayest in this thy day so attend to those heavenly visitations, as to improve those goodly talents given thee; it has been the engagement of my mind to beg for the fulfilment of Joel's prophecy, that the Lord in his mercy would pour out of his Spirit upon thee, so that thou wouldst feel a necessity to tell to others what the Lord had done for thy soul. Thus thou hast been brought before me, from time to time, with a hope that thy evening sun may set in brightness, and thou come to see the necessity of walking humbly before the Lord, knowing it is the humble He teaches of his ways; and then I firmly believe, thou wilt acknowledge as Job did, that thy former knowledge of religion, was but as the "hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee," and abhor self and repent in dust and ashes; and thou wilt see that my plain dealing with thee, according to thy request, is in wisdom, and may, in the Lord's own time, be blessed even to the salvation of the soul, which is far better than any worldly enjoyment or interest, which thou canst believe.

So I conclude with the language of our Lord and Master: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world, and where the Master is, there also shall the servant be."

Thus in love and good will I bid thee farewell, and remain thy sure friend,
J. S.

5th of the 10th mo., 1806.

To H. AND S. S. :

Dear Children:—I write from time to time in hopes, at least some of my letters may come to hand, although the distance from you is said to be 700 miles; but you, my dear children, are as much the subject of my mind as when with you, and in as comfortable a manner as at any time when separated from you, hoping all is well; which will surely be the case if there is a true resignation of our own wills to the will of our Heavenly Father; for it is promised, that all things shall work together for good to those who love the Lord. Therefore, to Him alone I recommend you, wishing all to be faithful unto death, even the death of every hurtful thing; for the things of this world call for close attention, so as not to err on the right hand or the left. The Apostle Paul saith, "those that provide not for their own have denied the faith, and are worse than an infidel; he also cautions against the incumbering things of this world, and especially those who are called to the ministry. And the prophet Ezekiel sets forth the danger of running when we are not sent, and also the dismal state of those who are lying down, loving to slumber. So that we need not marvel that our Lord so strictly charged his followers to watch and pray, which is the only means for our preservation, to which I recommend one and all; for I have been much led in supplication for all my dear children and friends, which has often been refreshing to me in this long and lonesome travel, and could rejoice that you at home may be in like manner exercised for me. In looking over my close trials in setting out on so long a journey, and how things have opened for my getting along, I find cause of thankfulness and taking courage in the Lord whose mercy endureth forever.

We are now near a little town called Knoxville, at the house of Thomas Marshall.

1806.

ESTEEMED FRIEND, A. E——N :

Thou and thy dear wife have often been the subjects of my thoughts since I was at your house, not doubting the truth of what I then had to mention, that most precious gifts were bestowed upon you both ; but unto thee, dear A., in a remarkable manner, I thought I saw something more particularly, which if thou attend to, will open the way for love and peace with all mankind. Read, and remember when Zaccheus had the offer of salvation come to his house, or rather to his heart, how trifling was outward prosperity in comparison to his duty to his Lord, (Luke xix. 8) ; and may it ever be remembered, that where much is given much is required ; therefore, as the prophet Isaiah recommends to those who follow after righteousness, to remember the rock from whence they were hewn, and the hole of the pit from whence they were digged. We are all poor hard-hearted dark creatures by nature ; and oh ! how profitable it is for us often to take a view of ourselves, and then look unto Abraham our father, and unto Sarah that bare us : “ For I the Lord called him alone.” And so He will thee, into many lonesome moments, as the children of Abraham have been, as is testified in the Scriptures of truth, also in the book of martyrs and in the writings of Friends. Oh ! how profitable it is to follow the example of the Lord’s faithful servants—even Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The example of Isaac in giving up Esek and Sitnah, contention and strife, then was he blessed with Rehoboth, where there was room ; and then he was fruitful in the land, and so wilt thou be. Those that fear the Lord, speak or write often one to another, and in such a manner that the Lord hearkens and hears, and a book of remembrance is kept ; for oh ! how the Lord’s children have to remember one another, even in their most solemn prayers—and may this be our situation, dear children ; but to remember the caution of our dear Lord not to cast your pearls before swine, who divide the hoof but chew not the cud, therefore they are unclean unto you ; for mournful indeed it is, that many professors have not the life and power of religion in their hearts, of whom we need to be cautious, lest they lead us

back to the law, which allowed the exacting eye for an eye and tooth for tooth, instead of advancing forward to that glorious Gospel spirit which enables us to overcome evil with good; then will hard things be made easy and bitter things sweet. And so it appears that those hard things between you and your goodly neighbors will be made easy, and like Israel's removal from the waters of Marah, to encamp in Elim, where were palm trees and fountains of water; and my faith is, this may become your happy situation, when all things may become new,—new company, new conversation, new covenants with the Lord, even to resign to His holy will; so wisheth and prayeth your aged and exercised friend for you. And when it is well with you, remember me when in the house of prayer.

JOHN SIMPSON.

3d mo. 13th, 1808.

DEAR CHILDREN :

It would have been pleasant to have seen you among us, yet as the reason of your not coming is, being bound to the service of the Church, it is joyful to me; hoping that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, which [signifies] that the gospel church and the service thereof, ought to be above all worldly gain or glory in the minds of Christians, so as to seek the welfare of one another, and invite to come up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths; for surely religion leads into a travel, not to sit down and take up a rest short of the true rest, lest it should become polluted; for I believe this to be the principal reason why so many visited ones seem to totter, some on one hand and some on the other; for assuredly there is good seed sown; but we have an enemy as desirous to have us and sow tares as ever he was; the likeness of religion sown in the heart, causing poor mortals to believe they can see the heavenly kingdom without being born again, and trusting in being the children of Abraham; whilst nothing short of sincere repentance will do. If they have lived a life of seeming innocence, and not improved their talents in the fear of the

Lord; when truly awakened, how sincerely will they repent and lament having spent their precious time in a state of ease. Repentance is the door wherein all must enter into baptism, so as to have the answer of a good conscience; and this work is so visible, so powerful, that the experienced prophet compared it to the refiner's fire and fuller's soap; then why should any suffer the enemy to deceive them and cause them to believe a lie?

In the First month of 1808, John Simpson brought to Falls Monthly Meeting, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, a certificate of removal from Abington Monthly Meeting, for himself, his second wife, Anna, and her minor daughter, Mary Ingham. At the same time, he obtained the concurrence of the Meeting with his prospect of paying a religious visit to some parts of New Jersey.

In the summer he again left home, accompanied by his wife, on a similar journey, as far north as Canada. The following two letters refer to this visit:

6th mo. 21st, 1808.

DEAR SON, J. S.:

I have written to thee so lately that I have not much to add; but watch, oh! watch, and wait for the spirit of prayer, so that thou mayest pray with the Spirit and with the understanding also, uniting with thy precious wife in offering up thanks for your manifold favors. Then I hope we may all unite, both parents and children, in this most joyful offering to the Lord, for His mercy endureth forever. My health is restored nearly as common, and thy dear mother seems recruiting. We are now near Ball Town, and expect to go forward as way opens. We have attended so many more meetings than we expected, that our progress forward is slow; so that we cannot see when we shall return; for the harvest seems indeed great, and an open door for laborers, with a sweet and cordial reception from our dear friends, which helps to make hard things easy and bitter things sweet. C. B., we expect will return; he has made out to drive beyond my expectation;

but as our stay may be longer than Friends expected, I thought it might be best for him to return; for Friends advise that young ministers go not much abroad until their ministry is proved at home, and I hope Friends will deal kindly and truly with the young man.

27th of 6th mo., 1808.

We are now near Utica. Being comfortably recovered, we are encouraged to go forward. Our progress is slow, by reason of taking so many more meetings than we had a prospect of. The harvest seems great and the laborers few; and what is also grievous, so many who have run well for a while, have suffered themselves to be turned aside, so as to be unfitted for the Master's service; but I secretly hope the worst is over, and that those sorrowful instances will be a lasting caution to our Society; and I also hope those clouds of unbelief are blowing over, and that light is come, and the glory of the Lord is rising upon his people, so that they may yet be as a city set upon a hill, that others seeing their good works may glorify the Heavenly Father. That we, dear children, may be of this number, is the desire of your aged father and sure friend,

JOHN SIMPSON.

The minute liberating John Simpson for the visit to Canada, was returned in the Eleventh month, with endorsements and minutes from different Meetings he attended, expressing the acceptable and edifying character of his labors among them.

In the following month, this industrious and devoted laborer in the good cause, again received the unity and sympathy of his Friends, for a visit to the families of Trenton Preparative Meeting, which he was enabled to perform to his own comfort.

1st mo. 15th, 1809.

FROM HANNAH SHINN TO HER FATHER:

My dear father:—We received thy letter of the 10th inst. wherein thou kindly invited us to meet thee and

mother at brother Hilborn's, which would indeed be very desirable, if convenient, as filial affection inclineth me to love to be in thy company; and also the desire I feel to experience a renewal of that animating love which I have at times been favored with when present with thee, even that Divine love which inspires thy heart and enables thee to sacrifice every thing that is called for at thy hands, and dedicate thy whole heart to the service of thy Heavenly Father; which ability I have abundantly craved, when, by adorable mercy, my heart has been drawn with the cords of His love. The influence thereof induced me to renew the covenant I had made to serve Him with my whole heart; and when prospects of visiting some of the churches in the love of the gospel have opened with sweetness to my view, I have said, Lord if thou wilt draw me I will follow thee whithersoever thou mayest lead me. But oh! the subtlety of the grand adversary, who is ever watching to beguile, to deceive and becloud,—yea, and to surround with temptations and discouragements,—and how shall I escape?

May I not address my dear father with the language that poor Hezekiah did the prophet, when the messengers of Sennacherib were sent with blasphemous words against the God of Israel; that this day is a day of trouble and rebuke and blasphemy; for the children have come to the birth and there is not strength to bring forth. Well may I intercede with thee, oh, my father! that thou lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left, for the remaining life, that I perish not; for, ah me! what can I say? Surely I feel the earnest of the prophet's exclamation, when he beheld the glory of the Lord and his own wretchedness, he cried, "Woe is me, for I am undone; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.

I remain thy tribulated daughter,

HANNAH SHINN.

2d mo. 24th, 1809.

To S. AND H. S.:

Dear children:—After my return from a family visit at Trenton and Stony Brook Meetings, (my dear wife

having got leave of our Meeting, and joined me in the service at Stony Brook,) I feel thankful I have been enabled to perform those services that I apprehended to be my duty, and hope to stand resigned to my lot to the end, with fervent desires, that all the called of the Lord may be faithful, in order to gain the answer of "Well done, good and faithful servant." I may further add, my greatest grief now, in old age, is to see my fellow laborers and burthen bearers fainting, or making shipwreck; which has been abundantly the case, even in imprudent proceedings in the things of this life; which is a matter of great moment, not to err on the right hand or the left, but in all things to give thanks.

The minutes of Falls Monthly Meeting show, that on three occasions during the year 1809, this diligent laborer in the Lord's vineyard, received the approval of his friends at home for journeys on religious service. The first of these was to Wyoming and that neighborhood; the next, to Baltimore Yearly Meeting; and the last, to New Jersey.

15th of 3d mo., 1809.

TO S. AND H. S.:

Dear children:—I and my dear wife are at present at John Buckman's, expecting to attend Wrightstown Meeting in company with Charity Cook, who seems to enjoy a pretty good state of health for a woman of her years, and has been enabled to travel through this cold winter season, which I have thought might be an encouraging example to others to press forward in their religious duty; for I often have to remember the charge against the slothful watchmen, as well as the charge against poor Uzzah: may there be a guard on each hand, is my sincere desire now in old age for all living. My dear grand-children have been more and more the concern of my mind of late; for our Lord Jesus Christ, who called us to come learn of Him who was meek and low of heart, at twelve years old, was concerned to be about His Father's business; and my lovely grandson E——, is grown to that age, and favored with a goodly understanding, and also opportunities to be

in goodly company. I have been in hopes of late, he is improving, so that if he holds on his way, he will be concerned to follow the example of the dear Lord and Master, so as to set a good example to the rest of my dear grand-children; he being the eldest grandson, his example may be powerful; and my dear lovely grand-daughter R——; we must not give her out, though wild and unsteady; she may yet gain that character, that many daughters have done virtuously, "But thou excelleth them all." My hope for my grand-children increaseth, because of the earnest supplication of my heart for them, like Jacob of old; and if they walk in the Truth, it will crown my evening with the greatest joy of all things here below. And my faith is, that the faithful labors of parents will be blest. J. S.

24th of 5th mo., 1809.

I am now at Wilkesbarre, having rode yesterday upwards of forty miles, which I bore to my own admiration and comfort. I expect to have a meeting here this afternoon, and then to move forward up the river forty or fifty miles, where a number of the Ingham family reside, and then I expect to return homewards, if life and health permit.

I have never thought more of good old Caleb than of late. His zeal for the prosperity of Israel, as to give his daughter to him that would smite their enemies; and also remarking the favors of the Lord, in giving him strength in old age. So I have thought I never held travelling better, or felt a more open door for service, even in those desolate corners of our land; and also I feel, I hope, a living zeal for the cause of Truth.

Never did the report of standard bearers sinking, seem harder than at this time. And although there seems to be dear children in many places opening their mouths in the ministry, many of them do not come forward to the joy of their parents; and when I call to remembrance the remarks of the Lord, that it were better that a millstone was hanged about our necks and we cast into the sea, than to offend His little ones, I am sometimes made fearful that I and many of my friends advanced in years and high in profession, are not skilful nursing fathers and mothers,

to lead the children into *baptism*; but too much like the mother of Zebedee's children; for those who are yet under the shadow, lead their friends into the water, to baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Oh! how often doth this language sound in my ear, Oh! Christendom; it is the dragon's tail thou hast to war with, who is striving to persuade thy children, that Christianity may be attained without baptism: but may all remember, he is a liar from the beginning. And consider the deep baptisms like unto the refiner's fire and fuller's soap, that the sons of Levi had to pass through, in order to fit them to offer an offering that might be pleasant, as in days of old. And so must all. And the priests who are the messengers of the Lord of Hosts, were commanded to eat their portion in the most holy place, so that we who are chosen by the Church, to be members of the Select Meeting, must submit to baptism and eating our portion in the most holy place, if ever we become skilful parents in the Church, and zealous for the cause of Truth, so as to pour out our prayers to the Lord of the harvest, to raise up more laborers.

I sometimes feel afraid of giving occasion, as though I was more industrious than was required of me; but when I read the lives of the servants of the Lord, through time, and find so many much more abundant in their labors, I feel a fear on the other hand. Thus may we watch and be faithful, so we may receive the answer of, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

JOHN SIMPSON.

DEAR CHILDREN D. AND MARY I.:

You have been much the subject of my thoughts this morning, and I think it may be profitable to inform you, that your mother and I went yesterday to see your uncle W. W. We found him very ill, and as I sat by him in awful intercession in solemn silence, I was enabled to see the great and solemn service of visiting the sick and afflicted, and that nothing short of a measure of pure and undefiled religion before the Father can qualify men or women for this service. Read the 1st chapter of the apostle James, which plainly sets forth this great work, so

✓ that each one may examine themselves and humbly seek for this needful qualification; for oh, how hard it is for the sick to be crowded with visitors, who like Job's comforters, are miserable comforters; it has been strange to me to behold goodly people so much crowding the sick and speaking to them, which is something trying beyond expression for them to bear. So that I make it a rule to be very cautious how I go into the rooms of the sick and afflicted, not to enter into trifling conversation, but to seek for the spirit of prayer. The Jew, under the law, was reprov'd for looking to physicians and not to the Lord; and the primitive Christians were charg'd when sick to send for the elders of the church, and let them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord.

Now as the right way of visiting the sick is so obligatory on Christians, and so truly comfortable, more than can be expressed, I sincerely wish all Christians to pray humbly for this qualification, lest a door should be open to hinder this blessed work, and the afflicted given up into the hands of physicians, who seem to have but little concern for their own souls, and therefore, cannot be skilful or truly useful to others in those awful seasons when soul and body must separate. How trifling then is the poor body in comparison to the never dying soul. The knowledge I had of the conduct of some of the physicians in my libertine course much weaned me from them; so that when visited with sickness their spirits seem'd so disagreeable, I strove rather to resign myself to the Lord than to have their company; although I fully believe, it is a great blessing to have skilful physicians, such as the Lord is pleas'd to gift and qualify for the service, who enter upon it from a belief of duty, seeking to the Lord for wisdom.

I often remember sending for your dear father when one of my family was sick, and he and I sat down in fear and care until we could feel free to administer something that appear'd to be suitable for the patient. Now my dear children, after this unexpected digression, I return to your uncle, whose afflictions seem'd to originate from various causes. The loss of his most dear helpmate was more

trying than any but the experienced can understand; his lonesome situation (although among so many); his exercise concerning the salvation of his soul and the cause of religion in general; and as the parents' greatest joy is to see their children walking in the truth, so it is their greatest sorrow when the contrary appears. But I thought the Lord was pleased to bless with the spirit of encouraging invitation, as though the winter was past and gone, and a visitation like the approach of a summer season invited to, as if the Beloved of souls spake and said, "Arise my love, my fair one, and come away." We had also a comfortable time in vocal supplication, so that we left your deeply tried uncle with some degree of hope.

Now dear D., I confide much in thee as thou art the elder, hoping that thou wilt improve by every favor. When I consider what a blessing the attendance of our Yearly Meeting has been to many, I hope it has been so to thee, for it appeared to be my duty to encourage thy attendance.

What abundance is said about liberty, cheerfulness and happiness. The proclamation of liberty has been so unskillfully sounded in our land, that there seems to be no proper distinction between it and licentiousness; but oh, what glorious liberty to be permitted to make a free choice of our way of worship, and to have a day set apart for that purpose; may each be thankful and improve these favors.

Our dear Lord bids us be of good cheer; He also commands to watch and pray, which makes the heart truly cheerful. The prophet Malachi remarks, that the *proud* are called *happy* and the workers of *wickedness* are set up, but *those who fear the Lord* spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard. These only are happy; for in the fear of the Lord *true happiness consists*.

Dear Mary, though thou art young yet, thou mayest die and hasten to eternity; and if thy life should be prolonged, I sincerely hope that as thou growest in years thou mayest grow in grace, and in the saving knowledge of the Lord, so that thy learning may be a blessing to thee, and enable thee to be an useful servant to the church. As little Samuel was early visited so hast thou been from time to time. Now mayest thou read with attention

the sorrowful lot of the unfaithful, that have been the visited and called of the Lord. Take warning thereby, so to walk, as will be a joy to thy aged and tried parents; it is a trial to thy dear mother that thou art placed from under her care; but my hope is, that thou wilt so close in with those heavenly visitations as not to be ashamed of thy dear Lord before men, then will He own thee before the Father and the holy angels.

I have lately been in company with —— and ——; their sober solid appearance was a lesson of instruction to me, and makes them like Jabez of old, more honorable than their brethren. I wish thee to consider the preciousness of time, and the need of improving every hour in some useful branch of learning.

J. S.

BELOVED FRIENDS:

I feel willing to make some remarks to you. First, let us, in the line of the ministry, lift up our eyes round about and see that from the days of righteous Abel until now, the Lord's servants have been of one heart and of one mind; that the cleansing and purifying of the heart in order to prepare for the Lord's service, is a good work. The experienced prophet saith, who may abide the day of His coming, or who shall stand when He appeareth, for He is like a refiner with fire, and like fuller's soap; and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and He shall purify the sons of Levi and purge them as gold and silver, so that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness; then shall the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord as in the days of old, and as in former years; then will the Lord come near to us in judgment. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ saw the work of baptism to be so great that he put it close to James and John, whether they would be baptized with the baptism he was baptized with, and drink of the cup he drank of, to which they assented; and may all do the same, and not go away sorrowful, as the goodly young man did.

Now is there not cause to fear that poor man, for want of being truly watchful, may err in vision and stumble in

judgment, so as to be like those of whom John spoke, that thought all was well whilst they were poor and miserable, blind and naked, and never witness the saving baptism, the answer of a good conscience, under this mistaken notion that ministers and elders are to witness this great change of heart, and not the church in general. Oh, how shall this sorrowful mistake be shown to the people. I believe it is a great blessing to the church when ministers and elders keep their places. The ministers who have a right to speak, one by one, when called thereunto, submitting to those who have a right to judge; and for them (the elders) to follow the example of Aquila and Priscilla, taking to themselves those whom they want to instruct and have a suitable opportunity to help them, for in the multitude of counsellors there is safety. But when one quickly speaks to a poor minister his sense, and then another speaks to him with a different judgment, how it makes elders lightly esteemed. Order is so useful in the church, that I wish it may be kept on a right foundation. I have been thankful of late, to find so living a concern among many elders that some way may open to make them truly useful; for I believe, that if the duty of elders were rightly seen into, they would witness that deep baptisms are absolutely necessary to travail in spirit with the ministers and rightly to judge; and also those that undertake to instruct, to seek for the gift of healing; then I have no doubt but meetings of ministers and elders will have all things so in common that they will be willing to serve the Lord with their substance, and unite as faithful burden-bearers, each one willing to do their part, keeping in remembrance the words of our Lord, that it would be better that a millstone were hanged about our necks than to offend his little ones. He also pointed out the order of dealing with offenders, first in a private way, then to take the case forward to the church, and then if they could not be gained let them be as the heathen or publican, and I hope the time will come when they may be taken into meeting again by request as though they never belonged; which will in time be brought about.

10th mo., 1809.

TO ANDREW ELLICOTT :

Respected Friend :—I inquired for thee at the Yearly Meeting, but found thee not, yet heard of thee by some of my friends, that they thought thou wast likely to follow the footsteps of some of our statesmen, who left the State and came into the Church with full purpose of heart ; and although this change may look *little* to some, yet surely it is *great*, and of more value than the highest post in government—yea, as King Solomon saith, “Virtue is far above rubies;” and this is evident. When poor man comes to see death approach ; then, only virtue, which brings peace of mind, is the greatest portion ; which those whose lot it is to visit the afflicted clearly see.

The losing of near and dear connexions, which is now thy lot, is a time of great trial. Not only the aged but middle-aged and youth are taken away, and how soon each one of us may follow to the silent grave, the Lord only knows, and to Him alone I recommend thee sincerely, wishing thou mayest be preserved from every hurtful thing. Thou art blessed with goodly talents, and mayest find in the Scriptures of Truth that wrapping in a napkin will not bring the answer of “Well done, good and faithful servant;” they must be improved in sincerity of heart. As thou art yet single, I hope thou wilt take a tender care of thy aged mother, which will be a great comfort to her now in her old age and lonesome hours, during the little time she may have to stay—though many, many youth may go before her. Mayest thou be diligent in the attendance of religious meetings, and in reading the Scriptures of Truth ; and this will open the way to get into the company of good people, and also to be preserved from unprofitable conversation and books, which interrupt the religious meditations of the heart, and hinder the entering into the closet of prayer, as our Lord and Master commands us to do. So in love and hope I bid thee farewell, and am thy sure friend,

JOHN SIMPSON.

Extract from a letter to O. Paxson.

As to the poor Indians, I feel glad that Friends are concerned for them, so as to try to help them in the best manner they can; and I have thought that the destruction strong drink makes among them, might quicken us to be more zealous in our testimony against it.

When I consider the zeal of our forefathers in promoting the gospel of peace, and the great advancement they made in the Reformation, beyond what those sons of the morning (the early reformers) who stood as valiants in their day had been, and certified they had lived up to their light, and had peace of conscience, recommending their brethren to press forward, fully believing more gospel truths would be manifested to the churches; but now, seeing so much like that of which the prophet Elijah complained, I have been tempted to make the same request, and as often feel reproof with clear sensations that it is not the natural life the Lord is calling for, but submission to His holy will, in which I hope to stand, feeling thankful that I have so far devoted my life in the way I have. But why I should travel so much alone, has been cause of great searching of heart. I am thankful I do not feel as one who has his day's work yet to do; therefore, wish that all may be faithful and do their work in the day-time. But in this one thing I often feel alarmed, lest I and my brethren and sisters of the present day have not enough sought for wisdom to discharge our duty as nursing fathers and mothers in the Church, and so the dear children are crying for bread, and there is none; for when I behold how few are growing in the ministry, fear has taken hold on me, lest the fault is as great [in us] as in the children. And when I remember messengers are to be sent to the lanes and the highways, I often think of the desolate corners among us, and the few religious opportunities afforded them; and as thou mentioned "the Church would be carried from place to place among those, if Friends were faithful." But by whom shall Jacob arise? for he seems at present to be small; yet, I do at times feel so much for those desolate ones, that if any of my fellow laborers could see how to step forward, I would joyfully do all that in me lies

to promote so good a work ; if we cannot move in action, may we unite in humble prayer to the Lord of the harvest to raise up more faithful laborers and send them forth : which is the desire of thy friend and brother,

JOHN SIMPSON.

P. S.—I hope thou canst read and understand ; for as I have not the tongue of the learned, neither have I the pen of the ready-writer. Please give my love to inquiring friends ; for I am willing all should know that I feel no more danger the earth with all her bars being about me, than of that woeful state of being at ease, seeing no place of safety but that of watchfulness.

The following reference to the settlement of some pecuniary difficulties, shows the regard he had for the care of Friends.

When I consider my present situation I feel for Friends, not doubting but they are concerned for me ; for I most surely believe, that if any of my friends were to do as I have done, I should be exercised on their account, and I do crave it of my most near friends to have a watchful eye over me. Now, as to engaging in business, I did seek for best wisdom, and on proving so far, I cannot see that I have done wrong ; for my son's case loudly called for care.

FROM O. PAXSON, AN ELDER, TO JOHN SIMPSON :

Dear Friend:—Few have been the opportunities thou and I have had, of latter time, of social solid conversation ; I have, nevertheless, often had thee in remembrance, with sincere desires, that thou may be preserved steadfast, in declining life. Thou wast called in thy youthful days as the disciples were, and like them, left all to follow the blessed Jesus ; and like them had to say, that nothing was lacking. Thou hast travelled over most parts of the United States, with the glad tidings of the gospel in thy mouth in great aboundings. Many have been able to set their seals to the truths thou hast had to proclaim. If after a dispensation of this sort, the Master should be pleased to call thee into a dispensation of silent suffering,

think it not strange. Paul was tried with want, and I think he says, "Had learned to be content." I have sympathised with thee nearly, in thy outward conflicts, but feel no advice on that head, only to remember this, that the kindness of our Heavenly Father is such, that He will open ways where none appear to his dependent children, in things appertaining to this life, as well as those of eternal duration.

Dear friend, I feel my mind dipped in secret travail for the prosperity of the Truth, as held forth by us, and the preservation of its ministers, in a particular manner. I have sometimes found thee, like John in prison, under discouragements, and felt strong desires, that patience might have its perfect work in thee; then, I doubt not, but thy bow will again be strung in strength and thy evening sun set in clearness. I know it is a great thing to be rightly qualified to judge of the ministry; nothing short of a measure of the same Spirit, and deep dwelling under its influence, can enable to travail with it, know when it rises, continues, and ends *in the life*, and qualifies the faithful watchers to warn in wisdom, when there is a straying from the life. I often mourn on my own account, the deficiency I feel, yet not without hope, that there are yet preserved among us, nursing fathers and mothers. and a living ministry; and my faith is, *that whilst ministers and elders keep on the right foundation, Satan's efforts to overthrow the Society will be in vain*; so that I seem as if I might close this letter with the language of encouragement: Be of good cheer, I believe thou hast fought a good fight, and although many rocks and shoals be near thy landing, as thou art careful to eye the Pilot, He will bring thee safe to the haven of rest.

OLIVER PAXSON.

A concern for religious service in the western part of Ohio, which had for some time rested on John Simpson's mind, so developed, that in the 5th month, of 1810, he believed it safest for him to request a certificate of removal to West Branch Monthly Meeting in that State. As he was then in the 71st year of his age, his friends

appear to have felt much concern at his prospect of removal into a section of country but newly settled. This is shown by the tenor of several of the letters which follow, as well as by the minute of Falls Monthly Meeting, which, after mentioning the request of John Simpson for a certificate for himself and wife, appoints a committee "to unite with women Friends in conferring with them and feeling after their situation and prospects, and *if they believe it right*, prepare a certificate agreeably to their request."

The following month the committee produced the desired certificate of removal, which was directed to be forwarded.

30th of the 6th mo., 1810.

DEAR CHILDREN S. AND H. S. :

We are now at S. D Ingham's;* I and my wife, and her children, Deborah, Isaiah and Mary Ingham, expect to set forward on our journey on Second-day morning; we expect to have the company of John Brown and Samuel Moon to travel some distance with us; we seem all in health, and I have faith to believe it is my duty thus to travel into that remote part of the country called Miami, about 15 miles above Dayton, near West Branch Monthly Meeting. And if any of our friends write to us, I would have them put their letters into the hands of Aaron Musgrave or Abel Satterthwaite, who I hope will take the needful care. We have two wagons, and two horses in each; J. Simpson's lad, A. Boyd, drives one, and I. Ingham the other. So things look comfortable, and my mind preserved in quiet, and do not feel much different from other times on leaving home on such errands, striving to put my confidence in the Lord alone, and set up mine Ebenezer, believing that hitherto the Lord hath helped me, and in Him alone I hope to put my trust, with secret cries to Him, not to forsake me now

* S. D. Ingham was his stepson, and at one time Secretary of the Treasury under President Jackson.

I am old and grey-headed ; and truly desire the prayers of my dear children and friends, and may you be faithful unto death so as to be worthy of a crown of life, is the desire of your aged father and sure friend,

JOHN SIMPSON.

19th of 7th mo., 1810.

DEAR CHILDREN :

I am now in a little town called Somerset, having some expectation of reaching Redstone settlement next First-day. I expect to have a meeting here this afternoon. I have left my wagons and family about five miles, at J. Neal's, a remarkably kind friend with a goodly family, with whom we have been two nights past, it being very rainy, so that we did not think it prudent to travel. J. N. is a relation of John Morton's. We have got comfortably along, and have cause to believe our detention is all in wisdom. I had thought I should have no necessity laid upon me to appoint any meetings, but before J. B. and S. M. left us, I felt so thoughtful about it, I conferred with them and some in the station of elders, and they were so clear in encouraging me, that I feel as if it was my duty to give up to it, and have been at several comfortable meetings, and on the whole have cause to hope that our present movement is all in wisdom. My dear wife seems to be like-minded, however strange it may appear.

We have been favored with health. I have not felt so able to travel on foot for many years, and I think I feel as comfortable a hope of getting forward as in the beginning, and all my dear children feel as near as ever, hoping this strange separation may all work together for good. A correspondence by letter may be easily kept up, and my letters I trust, will in some degree instruct and encourage you my dear children, in the room of my bodily presence. I hope you will all be preserved in love to the Lord, and one another.

J. S.

24th of 8th mo., 1810.

DEAR CHILDREN S. AND H. S. :

We are now in a small cabin that we found empty, near

our lot, and we are improving with industry to fit a place to dwell in, and find great numbers willing to work for cash, that seems scarce among them; provisions cheap, but work dear; so that it seems to take cash fast to make improvements. It may be said of the place, the land is rich, but the inhabitants poor, and hard set to make payment for their land. I think I never saw a place where they stood in more need of able men to carry on the milling business; and take the country produce. Our neighbors are principally of our own Society, and thickly settled, so that there is a comfortable meeting within less than a mile of us, where a monthly meeting is held, (I hope) to the honor of Truth; where Friends seem to be improving. I marvel not that our lot is cast among them, especially when I consider the prophecies which are so evidently fulfilling, that many in different parts of the world are devoting their property and talents to the promotion of the glorious gospel, although such numbers are dwelling at ease in their ceiled houses. While those great riches that are collected in populous cities are consumed by riotous living, if the hardships attendant on cultivating a wilderness were enough known and considered, it would be a blessing to the rich and full, who hurt their constitutions with such living more than all the hardships of the poor. Christianity, if humbly attended to, would make a great change and be helpful on each hand. This day we had a comfortable meeting, where my heart was enlarged in humble supplication, and a secret hope arose that my leaving all that was near and dear to me for Christ's sake, would be a blessing to many, and arouse them from their beds of ease; and even to you my dear children, both sons and daughters, I had this day to hope it would be more to your present and everlasting advantage than if I had been permitted to dwell in the most easeful situation among you, for I often felt as did the apostle, that woe would have been my portion, if I had not have given up; and having gotten so marvellously on our journey and now so favored with health of both body and mind, I have cause to hope it is the Lord's doings, however it may appear in the eyes of men, and may be truly

humiliating to all my dear children and faithful fellow-travellers, as it has been to me.

My dear wife and daughters have been strengthening and comfortable to me. The account of old Caleb, and his hard service, with many others in old age, have been encouraging.

. . . . I may acknowledge never more need of the prayers and sympathy of my fellow-travellers than at this time, often fearing as Moses did, lest anything should be done to the dishonor of the Christian name. . . . We were six weeks in coming, spending fourteen days resting with Friends and attending meetings. J. S.

P. S. If I have anything to say about the country, it is, that it far exceeds my former opinion. Having gone nearly 150 miles by water from Brownsville to Pittsburg, and thence to Wheeling, and some of the family to Cincinnati; the navigation is marvellous; such numbers of towns, and navigation from town to town; and the soil generally good. That whoever remembers or will make themselves acquainted with the early settlement of Pennsylvania, when farmers carried wheat 20 miles on horseback and sold it for 2s. 6d. per bushel, and other things equivalent, will consider that there is as great a prospect of this country's improvement as of Pennsylvania at that time.

Let any one consider the unhappiness occasioned by the great riches of the seaport towns and adjacent, and compare it with more remote places, and their manner of living will appear comfortable in matters relative to religion as well as the things of this world. And let all consider well their motive for moving. J. S.

18th of 9th mo., 1810.

DEAR CHILDREN :

I have had my health and strength as well as common, and as the hardship of moving never appeared great, so it was according to my faith. When I came to my lot of land, it exceeded my expectation, as also the whole country, with water navigation and towns on those navigable waters, so that I believe the whole globe doth not afford such an extensive inland country of fertile soil and goodly navigation; and although in such an infant state, it is im-

proving to admiration, and the produce selling as well as it did in Pennsylvania, sixty or seventy years ago. Yet, the undertaking of moving and settling a wilderness, is a matter of great moment; and it is marvellous to see what numbers of foreigners have come safely, and are settling comfortably, seemingly with thankful hearts.

When we arrived in such health and spirits, the land looking so beautiful, and hands plenty to hire, I set about clearing land and putting a house in order and digging a well, with spirit and industry, for some time, until I was marvellously alarmed as ever I remember to have been. My spirits sank, clouds covered my mind, and the wilderness was my lot for a season; so that faith almost failed; and like John, of old, in prison, ready to say, "Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?" So that I had to remember the Lord and Master himself when preparing for the ministry, was led into the wilderness, where Satan was permitted to tempt and try Him, and thus, I believe, the servants never witness closer trials than when preparing for this service. I often remember Moses, who was encouraged when Aaron, his brother, was promised to meet him; and surely it was strengthening to me, when a number of my sympathising friends seemed to feel for me; so that when I called a number of them together after meeting, to consult what I had best do, they seemed, with one accord, to encourage me to attend to my religious services, and my dear sympathising wife was a help-mate indeed; and a number of friends accompanied me, and D. Mote and S. Hollingsworth, who chose M. I. for her companion, and set out and went to Cincinnati, where we staid at J. Stalls, and had a comfortable meeting in their court-house. I believe there will be a Meeting of our Society there, and that some from Philadelphia will settle among them. They seemed a goodly, seeking people. We are now preparing to sit down in an appointed meeting in a little town called Centerville, not far from Dayton, and expect to attend our own Monthly Meeting next Seventh-day, and then continue my religious service, which I believe I came here for.

So in love I conclude, and am your deeply tried father,
JOHN SIMPSON.

10th mo. 5th, 1810.

FROM HANNAH SHINN.

Dear father:—We received thy letter, dated Ninth month 18th, being the second that has come safely since thou arrived at thy journey's end. It is a comfort to find that thou hast been favored to get along to the satisfaction of thyself, and that thy strength and courage is again renewed, and thy confidence confirmed in the all-sufficiency of the never failing Helper, whose condescending love and mercy is equal with His power. He remains to be graciously disposed to afford strength equal to the task that He requires. And oh! saith my soul, that He that was with thee in the days past, and wrought marvellous works in thee, and chose thee for Himself, that thou mightest show forth His praise, may continue to be with thee and deal marvellously with thee; not suffering thee to swerve or turn aside from His most righteous law; that by His all-sustaining power, thou mayest be kept from harm in all places whithersoever thou goest, and guarded safely on through all the vicissitudes of life and landed safely at the desired port, the haven of rest, where gloomy sorrow shall forever cease,—where thy mouth shall be filled with praise, and everlasting joy shall rest upon thy head. And if thy poor feeble-minded daughter should never be favored to see thee again in mutability, may thy humble prayers be offered up to the Father of mercies for me, that my faith fail not nor my love wax cold: that I may be enabled to run with patience the race that is set before me, so as to obtain "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus our Lord;" for it is only by His grace that I expect to be qualified to perform His divine will, in the way that will entitle me to an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, where I humbly crave that thou and I may meet, when time to us here shall be no more. In love I bid farewell; continuing to be thy exercised daughter,

HANNAH SHINN.

P. S.—Thy letters have afforded me much satisfaction, as also to a number of inquiring friends; some of whom I believe are nearly interested in thy welfare, and particularly desired to be affectionately remembered to thee.

The names, as they now occur are, George Dillwyn, Daniel Stroud, Charity Rotch, the latter being on her way to Baltimore, in order to attend the Yearly Meeting. H.S.

FRANKFORD, 4th mo. 22d, 1811.

To J. SIMPSON :

Dear Friend :—I have often thought of writing to thee since thou left our part of the country ; but from some cause, have omitted until now there seems a necessity laid on me, to inform thee of some of the particulars of the close of thy dear brother James ; the decease of whom, I expect thou wilt have heard of before this reaches thee. He had been, to appearance, as well as usual through the winter, got out to most of our meetings, was twice in Philadelphia at meeting, and attended our last Monthly Meeting at Abington. It was remarked, that he was much favored at almost all the meetings he attended through the winter. About the first and second days of this month, he complained more of his old complaint in his breast than usual, but it did not appear severe until the night of the 6th instant, when the doctor was called about 1 o'clock, and bled him, which relieved him for that time. On the ninth day of this month, I called to see him as I came from meeting, in company with Dr. Shoemaker. We found him lying on the bed with his clothes on. He informed us he had been in considerable pain since we had been gone to meeting, but was then much relieved, and appeared somewhat cheerful. I had not been at home more than fifteen minutes before I was sent for. On my return, he informed me that he believed he was going. I found that his pulse was gone in a little time afterward. He continued, after he informed me that he believed he was going, about one hour without much pain, his mind calm and his recollection clear, fully sensible of his approaching change, without any signs of alarm. About ten minutes before the close, he was concerned in a short supplication, that he might be shortly released, and that the Lord Jesus would continue to be with him ; after which, he requested to be turned on his left side, which we did. As we were turning him, he said, "It is done," and breathed but a few times afterwards.

Thus our beloved friend and brother closed a useful life, with his mind clear; and, I believe, with an evidence that his day's work was done. Long will the Church remember his labors. May the *spirit of Elijah rest upon Elisha*. The body was laid in the earth on the 11th instant, attended by a large number of Friends from different parts. Martha is in reasonable health, and appears to bear the separation as well as could be expected; indeed, I have often thought, that if there was not a secret Hand underneath, to support in such times of trial, human nature must sink. Myself and wife are in a pretty good state of health, but are both sensible that we are past the summer of life and are going down hill. I have just returned from our Yearly Meeting. I thought it was as favored a meeting as I ever attended; yet, no doubt for wise purposes, we were so left at one sitting, as to experience a considerable jostle. We had the company of William Williams, from Tennessee, and Betsy and Hannah Purinton, from Lynn, New England, with Susanna Horne, from Old England.

My wife joins me in affectionate love to thee and thine.

NATHAN HARPER.

Under date of Fourth month 13th, 1811, at West Branch, after a partial recovery from a severe attack of pleurisy, John Simpson wrote some memoranda. In these, after speaking of the prophecies foretelling the peaceable character of the kingdom of our Saviour, and of the spread of the principles of peace among the professors of Christianity, he thus refers to his own experience and feelings.

The heavier affliction I was under, the more was I satisfied with being here; which leads me to believe it is the will of Providence that Friends should settle here; and our having to meet with trials, may make us thankful that we are worthy to tread the tribulated path, that all those trode who had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. An expression of Rachel Wilson, a minister from Europe, has remarkably arisen in my

mind, which was; "That if all her travels and labors should be a means of helping *one poor soul*, she could be glad and not grudge her labor," which I hope is in a good degree my state; comfortably hoping it has been so even to mine own children. The letters I have received from them bearing their own evidence, and the evidence of my labors here, and above all, the joyful and peaceful state of mind I feel, and also sweet brotherly love among my friends; so that if I now have finished my day's work, let all my dear children, connexions and friends secretly hope, that if I live or die, I am the Lord's, and I wish these few things, however new and *strange*, may not be lost. I feel feeble in body, but seldom ever more joyful in mind, or more desirous that Truth may prosper. Yet I feel a heavy cloud over the Church, as the apostle Paul mentions concerning the poor deceived, bewildered, foolish Galatians. Oh! may every sensible Christian professor lay it close to heart, and unite in supplication that the prophecy of Zephaniah may come to pass: "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent." For I fully believe many are so grieved with the strange language of professed Christians, as to say with Jeremiah: "Oh! that I had in the wilderness a lodging-place of way-faring men, that I might leave my people and go there," complaining they were not valiant for the Truth, for indeed the religious language of Truth seems almost lost. A travelling minister, who greatly joyed to be with his brethren, told me that he found their conversation sometimes so barren and poor, that he had left their company and retired alone.

JOHN SIMPSON.

PHILADELPHIA, 5th mo. 14th, 1811.

FROM JONATHAN EVANS TO JOHN SIMPSON:

Dear John Simpson:—It was pleasant to receive thy letter, stating the situation of thy present abode, the resigned disposition of thy mind, and more especially that thou believed thy removal to be in the direction of best Wisdom; this makes the trials attendant on our outward circumstances easy to bear: following the leadings of Di-

vine counsel prepares the mind to receive further instruction. In His light ye shall see more light; and as we walk therein, we become the children of the Light and of the day, showing forth the praise of Him who hath called us to glory and to virtue. I believe thou hast sincerely endeavored to keep in this path, let the difficulties and discouragements be as they may, and felt an engagement to labor fervently with thy brethren, that their conduct and conversation might bespeak to others that they sought a country that is an heavenly:—well, dear friend, whether thy evening service shall close there, or in these parts, I trust the end will be peace. Our late Yearly Meeting was, upon the whole, a season of solid deliberation, wherein a degree of ability was afforded in some of the sittings, to search the cause of so much deficiency prevailing in our borders, and to show the way to an attainment of a comfortable and acceptable state. Mary Swett, again renewed her prospect of visiting France, which, on weighty consideration was, I believe decided with satisfactory clearness, that the way did not open for her to proceed; and I understand, she appears easy, in a belief that Friends in their sympathy with her, had been favored with a sense that her resignation would be accepted, and that she might properly remain at home. I suppose thou wilt, before this reaches thee, receive an account of the decease of thy brother James, who, with a short illness and not much pain, has been removed, I have no doubt, in the tender love of our heavenly Father, to an habitation of true rest and peace. Rebecca Wright has also departed this life, and was buried, I believe, the 1st of this month. She had attended our late Yearly Meeting, and seemed in usual health; but from some of her expressions to a friend, it might be gathered that she apprehended her course was nearly finished. Thus we are deprived of the company of those who were dear to us through the prevalency of the Spirit which actuated them in fervent endeavors to promote the real well-being of their fellow creatures; being willing to spend and be spent, that the glad tidings of the gospel might be freely published, that many might be saved and come to a knowledge of the Truth.

Thomas Scattergood has gone on a visit to the Yearly

Meetings of New York and New England, and to some Meetings within their limits.

Friends in this city are generally in health ; but with respect to our religious Society, I believe it may be safely said, things are at a low ebb ; there is, indeed, great need of keeping inward, seeking for Divine counsel ; that instead of being stumbling-blocks to visited minds, we may, through the humbling operation of the cross, be made instrumental in drawing them to a further acquaintance in the way and work of the Lord.

With much love, I remain thy friend,

JONATHAN EVANS.

22d of 5th mo., 1811.

A LETTER FROM ANNA SIMPSON TO H. S. :

Dear daughter :—Thy father and I received thy letters, which we expect were forwarded by C. Rotch. I was truly glad to find one of all our large family so deeply and truly sensible of the cause for which we so unexpectedly separated ourselves from our near and dear connexions and a comfortable house and home, to encounter the wilderness now in old age, when nature is bending to the silent grave : and thy kind encouragement was well timed, for it has been the hardest thing I have had to bear, that some of our friends could not see with us in this undertaking. This has sometimes caused me to call all in question and query, whether I had acted my part as a faithful companion or not ; but in my most solemn seasons I have remembered thy dear father's answer to me, "If you all forsake me I must go, for I have a work to do there." And when I told him I was willing to go to spend what time Truth might require, his reply was, "Then thou must give up to go as a liver there for a while," which was truly hard to submit to for a season ; and after passing through a trying time of affliction my mind felt a sweet calm and was resigned to whatever might be the will of my Heavenly Father to do with me or mine, fully believing in His right to dispose of His creatures according to His own good pleasure. Blessed be His name ! He has hitherto been with us in and through every trial we have had to pass through ; and we have got along

through our different labors much to our comfort. One favor among many others I most gratefully acknowledge is the preservation of my daughter's spirits. We have also been favored with health, until about six weeks past, Mary was taken with a fever, that continued for some time, and before she recovered thy dear father was taken with a severe attack of cholera. He was getting comfortably over it, we thought, when he took some cold and has had something of the pleurisy, and about the middle of the 4th month we were doubtful of his recovery; since that time he has gradually mended so that he was able to walk about, and rode to our Quarterly Meeting in the wagon, the distance there and back upwards of 60 miles. I was with him, and he stood the journey better than I expected; but since his return he has been much afflicted with an oppression in his breast and difficulty of breathing, which has alarmed me more than the former. We have had a long, wet time, and I fear he has taken cold, though I know not how; he is now so that he cannot lie in bed more than half the night, though he walks about and directs his business during the day. I fear he is becoming like thy uncle James has long been. He has not had anything of the outbreak on his back this winter, and seemed very brave, and rode many long cold journeys on horseback through bad roads and inclement weather, and seemed to stand all to admiration; and now, though so afflicted with shortness of breath, he often says he is comfortable, inasmuch as he has fought the good fight and he believes there is a crown laid up for him, and if it be the Father's will, he is as willing to lay down the tabernacle here as any where. But my dear H., we do not feel as if we could bear to part with him yet, and I know that if it be the Father's holy will to continue him longer with us, He can restore him to health again, and to Him alone I appeal, for I believe I looked too much at those fears before I gave up to come here.

From thy anxious mother,

ANNA SIMPSON.

A few days later—not dated.

P. S. As my letter did not go as was expected, I now add: thy dear father is something better, and Mary also;

the weather is clearing off, and I hope they may find relief from it ; we have had a kind tender doctor of our Society, (not the least of our favors.) I put it close to thy father whether he did not find his mind at liberty to return to his children ; he said he did not, but if I and the girls did he would go with us, but it would be all in the dark to him, and added, he would much rather stay. Since that I have felt most easy to say nothing further on that subject to him.

A. SIMPSON.

17th of the 7th mo., 1811.

DEAR CHILDREN :

Now, after a long time of being unwell, nearly four months, yet not taken entirely off of my feet, first occasioned by taking cold, changing my clothes on a warm morning and going abroad, and the weather changing ; through all I have been made joyful in the house of prayer, and the Lord was graciously pleased to make my bed in sickness. [I have been] skilfully and tenderly nursed, and have had much of my friends' company, so that time did not seem lost, but spent more comfortably than could be understood but by the experienced mind. When I heard of the death of my dear and only brother, and received many letters and solicitations to return to Bucks county, we leased out our land and made a settlement of our affairs, as time would admit, and came between 40 and 50 miles on our way ; but I was so weak it did not seem prudent to come on, and after staying two weeks at my dear, kind friend, Jonathan Wright's, we came back 12 miles to Waynesville, where J. Satterthwaite is settled, and have got into a comfortable house, where is a small family, and all seems solemnly quiet and remarkably comfortable ; near to meeting and among kind friends. This appears a lofty and healthy situation, where some think a Yearly Meeting will be held. And as our lots are so remarkably cast here, we hope not to move until way opens in more clearness, for things look so pleasant here, either in the farming line or trade—provisions cheap, land plenty, for sale either improved or not, so that I believe it would be a comfortable place for all of you, my most dearly beloved offspring. And as I thought I did like Gideon, turn the fleece and

weigh matters to the best of my understanding, so now I feel more comfortable, thus separated from you all, than I could have been among you, whilst under a full belief of duty to leave you for the gospel's sake; and it often ran through my mind that it would be a means of the stirring up of your pure minds in the blessed truth; and surely if it might be said in any place the harvest is great; it is here, among our own Society and others. Thus in love to all, I bid farewell.

J. S.

As things have opened to me I am willing to show them to you, my dear children, in as short a way as possible, in hopes of encouraging you to seek for yourselves. The prophecies of Paul concerning the exalted state of the man of sin, and his consumption and destruction, also John's prophecy concerning the sealed book and the opening thereof, being one thing in substance. The consuming of the man of sin by the spirit of his mouth being a gradual work, so was the opening of the sealed book; the sinful heart awakened by the Lord's mighty judgments that terrify like the thunder in the heavens, being thus alarmed, it is called to come and see. Death then appears as a conqueror crowned and armed, going forth conquering and to conquer; being thus awakened and striving to be faithful, additional trials succeed. But those days are shortened for the elect's sake. Thus the Lord preserves His faithful ones in things, spiritual and temporal, and enables them to journey forward, beholding His wonderful works in gradually opening the sealed book of man's heart, and making known those things that have been hid from the wisdom of this world through the medium of revelation to the babe-like state of innocence and humble seeking, until heavenly silence is seen into, and the gospel trumpet, (the true ministry,) given to the faithful servants to sound as the Lord directed, which seems the greatest attainment that the prophet saw the church attain to, being near that glorious state when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.

Oh, what cause of thankfulness that those glorious prophecies are now fulfilling, and so clearly seen into; that

the morning of the day of "Peace on earth and good will to man," is now again dawning after a dark night of falling away; and also true spiritual worship [is being restored], even heavenly silent worship, which seems to open the way for the true ministry after the order of Melchizedek, who received his priesthood from the Lord alone, who is without beginning or end of day, and being His priest, a messenger of the Lord of hosts, he was accounted a great man.

So this great and glorious discovery will make all who are faithful and truly fitted and prepared to receive the gospel trumpet and sound, according to Divine command, great and useful indeed, and also every true worshipper.

I still hope one or more of you will come to take care of us here, for if we give up to come back it looks likely I should drop in the wilderness; but how my heart flows with joy and resignation, and I hope preparation, for the silent grave. Surely my pen cannot express the feelings of my resigned heart; thus once more, I bid farewell, with desires that you, our dear children, may be humbly engaged to know what you have to do concerning us, your aged parents, in this strange and singular trial. J. S.

12th of the 8th mo., 1811.

DEAR CHILDREN :

As I have written much to you, from time to time, relating both to temporal and spiritual welfare, I have little to add, only to press home to you that close labor of Paul to the Galatians; and not to you only, but to the church in general. I have endeavored to do that which I sincerely recommend, that all may improve those precious talents God has given them, so as to receive the answer of "Well done, good and faithful servants;" which at this time is my greatest concern for you, my dear children. And although this singular move may add to your trials, both spiritual and temporal, yet, as you keep to that golden rule, to do to others as you would have them do to you, it will work together for good. And as J. and I. S. have made such beautiful remarks in their letters,

concerning the settlement of outward affairs, it renews my faith and hope, that your greatest concern will be to the honor of Truth, to which I have dedicated a long life, in such a manner that I have a joyful admittance in the house of prayer, thanksgiving and praises to the Lord, to whose will I feel myself resigned, never expecting to see my native land more; but feel here, as one dwelling among mine own people, in love, peace, and plenty.

The bearer hereof, N. Haines, in whose house we dwell, I hope you will take a friendly care of; and write back to us by him. I should be truly glad to see any of you.

Thus, in love to you all, I conclude with this, perhaps my last epistolary correspondence, wishing it to be carefully read and noticed.

J. S.

Remarks made by John Simpson, during his last sickness.

I have now been above a month tried with sickness and weakness; some days and nights with sharp pain as ever I experienced; yet, most surely I could say, that the Lord did make my bed in sickness, and did hear my supplication that I was enabled to put up, that the Lord would look down upon me; and feeling a well grounded evidence of the heavenly Father's love, as is set forth in the creed of the early reformers, and also in the Scriptures of truth, I most earnestly desired that I might bid a final farewell, notwithstanding my own children are far from me. Believing that my leaving them, will add to their furtherance in true religion, it has been made more easy to me than could have been expected; and also believing I have nearly, if not quite, done my day's work. I am now in a remarkably weak state, yet much relieved from pain; and being kindly and skilfully nursed, my mind seems more sweet than common for such a length of time, having so sweet an access to the closet of prayer; and fully believing that the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much; as our dear friend, Gideon Mollineaux, was enabled to set forth in West Branch Meeting, in the Fourth month, 1811.

I have been reading William Wilberforce's View of the

Christian Religion, where he laments the neglect of reading the Scriptures of truth ; whereby religious conversation is almost lost, and a poor, barren, unprofitable, nonsensical conversation taking place—too applicable to the present time,—so that even the needful portion of letter-learning is neglected, that we have cause to lament, like Hosea, the prophet, fourth chapter : “ My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge ; ” “ Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will reject thee. ” Therefore may we pray for the fulfilment of Zephaniah’s prophecy, iii. 9 : “ For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent ; ” and how encouragingly doth the prophet promise success to the faithful, that they shall not be ashamed. Many goodly ones at this time are ashamed to own their Lord and Master before men, therefore often meet with great loss. One thing I am free to mention, although it may appear little to some, my mind has been comforted from morning to morning by the voice of the turtle dove, so loudly sounding in our lofty forests, as with the sound of the Gospel of Peace ; inviting and encouraging the inhabitants of this western world, that “ Peace on earth and good will to men, ” is offered unto them at this time.

The following relation of some of his last religious services, and of the closing scenes of his dedicated life, was drawn up by his faithful wife.

At a small village where parts of several Friends’ families had connected themselves with the Methodists, after sitting sometime in silence in one family, he asked the woman if she had another child. She answered she had. He requested her to send for him. She went out and soon returned with a solid-looking young man ; they quietly took their seats, and in a few minutes he rose and opened to us, how the prophecies point out, in the opening of the seals, the progress of the reformation of the soul, from sin and darkness to grace and light ; and warned the wrestling seed, not to take up a rest short of the opening of the seventh seal, where there was “ silence in hea-

ven for the space of half an hour." This was defined to be silence in the heavenly mind ; a ceasing from earthly activity. Then were the trumpets given (the gospel ministry) ; and the angel, with the golden censer and much incense, was given, that he should "offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne." The dear youth was much broken, and ever after treated him with marks of tender affection.

The next day we reached our home, where he learned the decease of his only and beloved brother. Although it was observed to prey upon his bodily strength, he was borne above murmuring, with Christian fortitude. He often said of him, "He has fought the good fight, and I feel an assurance he has obtained the crown ; but I did not think I should have felt it so hard—yet we were closely united,—we were both called together out of a wicked world, and together mourned in sackcloth ; together received forgiveness and the gospel trumpet, and together fought the Lord's battles ; and I hope, together will receive the crown." His disease gradually increasing ; and receiving a number of solicitations by letter, from his children and friends of Pennsylvania, to return ; and feeling his work here nearly if not quite closed, he seemed for a time to give up in his mind to go back ; upon which we made the attempt, and came about thirty miles on our way, when he was confined to the house for two weeks, except once at meeting, when he was favored to labor faithfully in the gospel, though under the necessity of leaving the meeting as soon as he had cleared his mind. In the course of some days, his health somewhat better, he proposed setting out ; and said he felt some little to do at Centre Monthly Meeting, (that being twelve miles on our way,) adding, it makes no difference where the tabernacle lays down, if amongst my friends. It being a fine, cool airy day, he rode very comfortably to his beloved friend, Jonathan Wright's ; attended their meeting the next day, and the following night spoke of setting out in the morning, if he felt no worse ; but that night he was taken so ill as to give up all thoughts of returning to Pennsylvania, but told me he was willing to stay there or return to Waynesville. I thought it most expedient to

stay till he recruited a little; and then we all thought it would be best to go back to Waynesville, and take a room and board ourselves until the heat of the summer should be a little abated. We did so; and got a comfortable situation in the house with a worthy family, where he attended meeting several times, and rode out sometimes as he was able, which seemed to refresh him much: all which time his mind seemed richly clothed with gospel love to all his fellow creatures; and in so sweet and persuasive a manner did he labor with a number of young men who sat up with him, that they often acknowledged that they were so far from thinking it a hardship, they were thankful for the privilege. In a very kind and affectionate manner, he often spoke of the kindness of those about him, but with great care to ascribe all to the Author of all our mercies, often observing, that he did not recollect ever to have felt the Divine presence to have been so sensible for so long a time, and so unclouded.

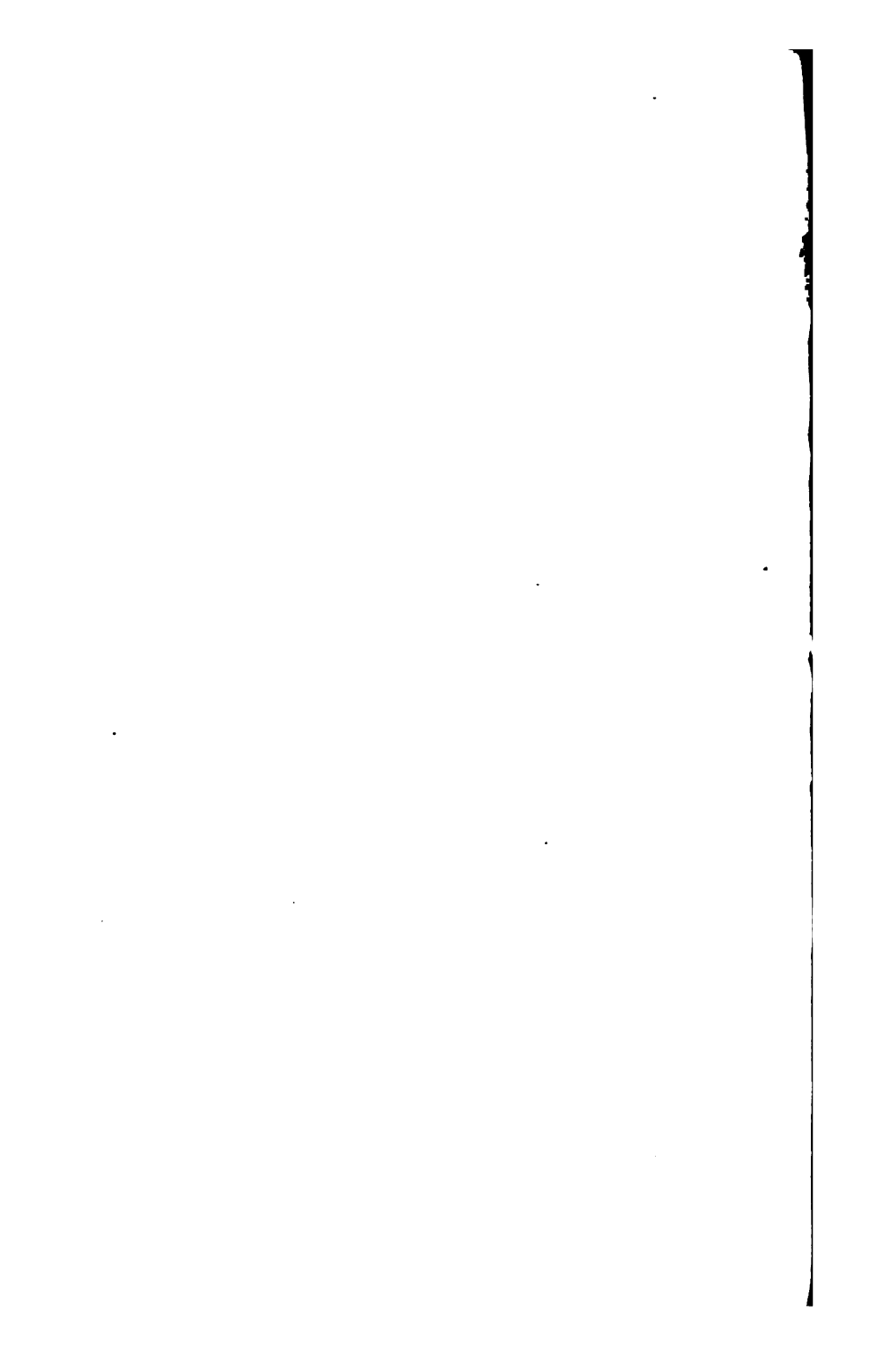
His disorder increasing, some of his friends joined me in persuading him to let us call a physician; to which he had hitherto objected, saying, the Lord had ever been his physician: expressing his wish, that He might be to the end: "For blessed," said he, "be His holy name, He makes my bed in sickness." Being however passive, a doctor was sent for who, however, could only prescribe some palliatives. Such was his difficulty of breathing that he seldom laid down in the night, it being at that season increased so as to occasion great pain, when in the daytime he was comparatively comfortable.

A short time before he died, he said he had been thoughtful of inditing a few lines to West Branch Monthly Meeting; and being asked what he wished to say, he answered, he wished to tell them, that he believed he was moved to go and stay a time with them; and had labored according to his ability, both by precept and example, to impress that blessed precept, do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God; and now felt willing to rouse them if possible, to a more lively remembrance of those favors, assuring them that the Lord was now calling for more ripe fruit at their hands.

Many times he was heard to say, "All is well; dust

must return to dust; I have fought the good fight, and all is well, tell my dear friends; all, all is well." Many times, all through his sickness, he remarked, that the most prevailing deception Satan practised upon mankind, was to persuade them they could be Christians without baptism; the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost. And a short time before he died, he requested it to be taken down in writing and spread among his friends, that the greatest deception Satan practised, and one in which he most prevailed against Christians, was to persuade them that they could be Christians without baptism.

On the night of the 13th of 8th mo, 1811, his dissolution appeared to be nigh; but appearing to be dozing, I walked into an adjoining room, there being several in the room, and many breaths affecting his breathing. Upon his awaking, and hearing him ask for me, I stepped immediately to the bed side; he looked pleasant, and put his hand to the side of my face, which would have fallen had I not supported it; he spoke not, but quietly passed away without a struggle. And I can say of him with the utmost confidence, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."







C 8347.912.15
Memoirs and letters of John Simpson
Widener Library 003629152



3 2044 081 824 013 .